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LORDSHIP OF THE AIR

On one aspect of this war the prophets have been justified by the event. From Lord Baldwin to H. G. Wells, from Lawrence of Arabia to the ordinary men and women looking up at the roaring skies, they all said that this would be an air war. They were right. Sea-power is still essential to troop-transport and supply, and the only means of consolidating victory is still occupation by land forces. But ships without air cover are defenceless against the bomber, as we learnt when the *Repulse* went down, and no army can advance without protection against dive-bombing. On the other hand, the bomber, without any land force, can inflict the equivalent of major defeats upon an enemy over whom air ascendancy has been secured. Air mastery, as we are now witnessing in the devastating raids upon Axis cities, is the key to victory in modern war. And while the other relative novelty, the use of the armoured division, has a foreseeable limit to its development, it is obvious that we are still far from finality in air-craft operations.

Anglo-American raids on Germany and Italy are now, somewhat belatedly, used by Franco and other Axis spokesmen as propaganda for peace. But it does not need the outcries of Franco, who has so conveniently forgotten Guernica, to make the people realise the final implications for civilisation of air warfare. We all know its possibilities, most of us from experience. Some British propagandists, who should know better, as well as some Americans, who are without experience, mistakenly think that gloating over destruction will be popular with the people. They are beside the mark. One of the strange things about this struggle is that so few people feel vindictive about air bombardments; many express sorrow that enemy towns should suffer as ours have done. They can still think in human terms and remember that we are exterminating, not Hitler and Mussolini and Goebbels and Göring and Himmler—which we should all love to do—but people very like ourselves. Civilised people mourn too for the old, beautiful cities which are part of the expression of the other side, the creative side, of the European spirit. Nausea afflicts us when occasionally B.B.C. announcers depart from the objective tones befitting tragedies which only the most absolute military necessity can justify. We know that we have to go through with it; we ask, without hypocrisy, that every effort should be made to restrict the damage to civilian life, and bombing should be accompanied by assurances that if they turn against their rulers a hopeful and honourable future is in store for them.

After the war we cannot reverse history, and "abolish the air" as Lord Trenchard said he wished to twenty years ago. We must fasten on the fact that air control now means world control. This is the clue to common policy in peace. If Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union use the overwhelming power which they will command in the hour of victory to organise a world air control to be used for the maintenance of peace, they will have assured at least a breathing space for mankind. If they fail to make an effective agreement the world can only look forward to the suicide of human society.

The organisation of air control is not politically easy. Obviously the power to manufacture and use aeroplanes, both military and civil, cannot be left in private and irresponsible hands; air control further involves a very large surrender of the sovereign power of all States to a world organisation which will not lie within the command of any of them, even the greatest. Now it is idle to pretend that American Business has yet reached the stage in its thinking when they realise this pre-condition of world order. Far from it. Many of the most wealthy and influential sections of Republican magnates are delightedly rejoicing in the conception of an American air-imperialism, in which, by dint of their capacity for mass-production of aircraft, they hope to dominate the the habitable earth—a policy which would only make sense if they had no potential rivals. The pressure of such groups makes it hard for President Roosevelt, who has shown that he is aware of the issues at stake, to make progress in air planning with Britain; while here the boasts of the American flying interests stimulate a similar attitude among those who look forward to deyeloping the British side of civil aviation. The problem of Russia is simpler. Her air industry is already nationalised; technically the U.S.S.R. is prepared for an international link-up. Stalin's policy will, no doubt, be dictated, as hitherto, by his estimate of the intentions of the capitalist Powers. The war has shown that the Soviet Union is as dependent upon collective security as we are. We should therefore try to persuade the United States to hurry the tempo of their political reflection, as the main factor lacking for agreement between the Great Powers, and the best way of doing that will be for Britain to produce as quickly as possible a practicable scheme by which World Airways may be organised for the general, and not for the private or the purely national interest.

As for the European States, they have, in this matter, learnt to be realistic. Passionately nationalistic as they still are and unable, if we judge at all from their representatives here, to achieve a common policy on many other problems, they are yet agreed, without, we believe, a dissentient voice, on the absolute necessity of the internationalisation of the air. They tend to think of this in regional terms, with the abolition of national air forces as such, and with a European air force as the guardian of all nations against aggression. They also accept a common European control of the manufacture of planes and of the main routes and aerodromes. This unanimity, based on the bitter experience of Belgrade and Rotterdam, of Antwerp and of the refugees on the roads of Burgundy, must be used to make a working security.

The technical condition of the air organisation presents difficulties which seem slight in comparison. It may be said to have been solved in working already, in the international composition of the R.A.F. and in the wartime nationalisation of the civilian routes. The experts, if they were given a policy to carry out, would have no great difficulty in framing an air system in which world flying was pooled and zoned, while necessarily leaving the major share of control with the Great Powers which must take the major responsibility. That the obstacles are not technical, but political, became clear enough in the debate in the House of Commons on Tuesday. The debate turned on the efficiency of civil aviation and though some M.P.s talked sensibly about an international scheme the speakers on behalf of the aircraft industry did not see that their ideas about national and private competition were just blue-prints for the next war. This debate shows that only a few M.P.s have yet realised the elementary fact that only by international control of the civilian plane, which is convertible to use for bombing or troop-transport, can there be any possibility of world peace. The Government, which to-day speaks with an authority that no peacetime Government can hold, should step in to state what it knows to be the truth and produce a sane plan for International Airways after the war.

Germany on the Defensive

General Dittmar, whose wireless commentaries are supposedly inspired to some extent by the German High Command, devoted his radio talk last Monday to elaboration (supported by the usual ponderous references to Clausewitz) of the argument that Germany could well afford to remain on the defensive and by so doing would retain the initiative in the sense of forcing her enemies to deliver an attack, which would be disastrous for them, on the Fortress of Europe. He prefaced this argument with the admission that in 1918 Ludendorf's final offensive in the West was forced on Germany because passivity would have meant that the Allies would accumulate an ultimately overwhelming force in the field. It seems doubtful whether the General's audience in Germany could have been greatly reassured by this attempt to prove that conditions in 1943 are radically different from those existing 25 years ago. German listeners must be painfully aware that the same concentration of Allied force against Germany is now proceeding apace; that the Axis fortress, notwithstanding Germany's conquests, is still too limited in area and suffers from too many important deficiencies (oil, fats, rubber and certain metals) to be economically self-supporting; that Germany has already passed the peak of mobilisable man-power; that under the growing weight of air attack the volume of her war production and the efficiency of her internal communications must steadily decline; and that even the (invariably exaggerated) German claims of U-boat sinkings during the past spring afford no indication that Allied plans are being seriously interfered with, much less crippled, by defensive submarine operations. In short, the analogy between 1943 and 1918 is much more apparent than the difference which General Dittmar endeavoured to prove. It by no means follows from his talk that the German High Command, whose members must be well aware of the demoralising effect of a Maginot complex on troops' morale, is not planning a " preventive " attack this summer on the Eastern Front—perhaps in late summer when new divisions raised by last winter's comb-out are fully trained and the Allies' Mediterranean plans have been more clearly disclosed. What does seem probable is that, except on the unlikely assumption that General Dittmar was being used simply to mystify and mislead, the German High Command is now endeavouring, as a precautionary measure, to dispel any hopes that the German public still entertains of the long-promised, long-deferred, " final victory this year."

Hard Bargaining in Algiers

The political manoeuvres which are being conducted behind closed doors in Algiers bear a resemblance, which would be amusing were the issue less serious, to those which centred round the figure of Achilles in another theatre of war many buried centuries ago. M. Peyrouton has eliminated himself from the political scene by tendering (maliciously?) to each General as "President of the Executive Committee" his resignation from the Governor-Generalship of Algeria. Thus one personality, whose retention of office de Gaullists would presumably have regarded as an insuperable stumbling block to agreement between the Generals, has now been liquidated. But others remain. There are General Noguès and General Boisson; and it is uncertain whether the appearance in Algiers of General Georges, who was second-in-command to General Gamelin in 1940 and has now been nominated by General Giraud on the (still nebulous) Executive Committee, aids or obstructs agreement. Above all, there is the question of General Giraud's personal position. He has apparently accepted in principle General de Gaulle's demand that the exercise of military powers should be subordinate to a political body. If, therefore, General Giraud is to remain as Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces in North Africa, the logical conclusion should be his resignation from the Executive Committee.

American Coal Stoppage

There are two factors, one economic and one political, in the American coal stoppage. So far as wages are concerned, Mr. Lewis was willing to accept the $1.50 compromise advocated by Mr. Ickes. The employers refused it, but apparently were ready to concede an advance of one dollar. According to usual procedure in such matters, Mr. Lewis would now be appealing to the Administration to bring pressure on the employers. He prefers to continue the strike, and the War Labour Board has ruled that there can be no further wage negotiations while the stoppage lasts. This throws the ball to the President, who has two obvious methods of stopping the strike. Both of these would suit Mr. Lewis by making the President highly unpopular with the mass of Labour all over the States, which has so far been his strongest support. It therefore seems unlikely that Mr. Roosevelt will either use his powers to conscript miners and then send them back to the pits as soldiers, or that he will impound their Union funds. One result of the strike will be to strengthen the Republican move in Congress for anti-strike legislation. If Mr. Lewis refuses to call off the strike, the danger to American production will be great and swift, and public agitation against the Mineworkers Union will certainly be supported by the A.F. of L., affiliation to which Mr. Lewis is seeking.

Priorities

The British Government has just presented to the Turkish Government five merchant ships of 5,000 tons each. This is cheerful news. If we can afford to be so generous towards a Power whose friendship we are seeking, the plight of our shipping can hardly be so grave as some Members of the Government had suggested. We recall in this connection that in the recent debate, when Mr. Eden had to explain why no Jewish refugees are in fact reaching Palestine, though thousands in the Balkans are awaiting rescue, he gave as the explanation the shortage of shipping. Yet these five ships were in these waters with nothing urgent to do for our own military purposes. If Downing Street were as eager as it proposes to be to rescue some of Hitler's victims, might it not have made it a condition, in presenting these ships to the Turks, that on their first voyage under a neutral flag they should carry some Jewish children to the National Home?

The Postal Workers and the T.U.C.

The announcement by Sir Walter Citrine that the Trades Union Congress proposes to accept the affiliation of the Union of Post Office Workers, and to place the full support of Congress behind them if the Government takes action against them, puts the Prime Minister in an awkward dilemma. Mr. Churchill must share with the managers of the Conservative Party both the initial responsibility for the entirely indefensible severities of the 1937 Trade Union Act and the more recent responsibility for accepting the Conservative veto on the moderate amendments of the Act asked for by the T.U.C. The Union of Post Office Workers, in deciding to defy the
Act with the assurance of T.U.C. support, is n
guilty, as a Union, of any breach of the la
Action must be taken, if it is taken at all, again
the Union's members, who may be held to forfe
their position as Civil Servants if they continu
to belong to it after the affiliation has gone throug
It is, however, difficult to suppose that th
Government will proceed to make itself ridiculou
by threatening to dismiss the majority of th
employees of the Post Office, and by provokin
into the bargain a conflict with the entire Trad
Union movement. Yet what else can it d
except give way, as it ought to have done lon
ago, and agree to an amendment of the offensiv
Act?

Mr. Bevin Looks Forward

A very interesting interview with Mr. Bevi
appeared in this week's *Sunday Times*. He insiste
particularly, for example, on the need to plan fo
the full use after the war of the great factori
built for war purposes and to set out to create ne
communities round those factories in order t
reduce the waste of time and energy on transpor
to and from work without reproducing the pr
war conditions of urban congestion and di
unity. He insisted too on the need to appl
wartime methods of mass production to the makin
of cheap " utility " goods for the consumers i
time of peace; and he pertinently instance
refrigerators, washing machines, and other house
hold requisites, which could by this means be pu
on the market at vastly lower prices than hitherto
With these aspirations he coupled warning
" If there is to be high-pressure salesmanshi
and weekly payments and high rates of interes
you cannot get the demand and the productio
that will expand employment and bring thes
amenities into the homes of the country." An
again, " If, in the sacred name of private ente
prise, these amenities are to be left to private co
trol and distribution the mass of the public ma
not get the full benefit of them, and the field o
employment which they should open up to wome
will be largely closed." Mr. Bevin evidently look
with the advance of labour-saving in the home, fo
a big permanent expansion of women's industri
employment; and he also urges that there ca
be no return to the pre-war conditions of domesti
service, which must be reorganised as a reputabl
profession on the same lines as nursing—appar
ently to a large extent on a collective or corporat
basis. Mr. Bevin further stressed the magnitud
of the required post-war housing programm
called for a high priority for rural housing, an
promised that demobilisation would this time b
carried through in a sensible and orderly wa
He prophesied that the factory, medical, nursin
and canteen services would be made permanen
urged the value of shorter working hours, an
after touching on the need for a vast developme
of the hostelry and catering trades, ended on th
note that unless the policies he had outlined we
followed, the country might " be faced with in
dustrial upheaval."

Civil Aviation in the House (*by our Parli mentary Correspondent*)

Two Tory M.P.s, Perkins and Tree, who ow
their own private planes, introduced a ragged bu
lively debate on Civil Aviation. The To
benches were filled with their younger Mem
bers; many of these are in the Services, or we
until recently, and most of them are classed
progressive on social questions such as th
Beveridge Report. Yet their approval to th
issue of civil aviation was usually narrowl
nationalist and inconstructive. On the whol
they favoured private enterprise (great indignatio
was shown when Bellenger jibed at them fo
supporting railway and shipping interests an
trying to have a finger in the aviation pie) an
they were sceptical about internationalisatio
although there were exceptions, such as Group
Captain Helmore. Maisky looked down fro
the gallery; he seemed to me to grin at the
fears of American post-war domination and
their scant references to the U.S.S.R.

THE COMPANIONSHIP OF NATIONS

In refusing even to meet the Communists to discuss the new situation created by the abolition of the Comintern, the Executive of the Labour Party has once more done what we all expected it to do. On the day that it surprises us, our hopes for the advance of Socialism in this island will begin to soar. Thus is there nothing to be done, save to register once more the familiar fact that the management of this Party acts as if it were incapable of seeing that the same policy and attitude that proved so ineffective between 1924 and 1940 will be still more fatal if pursued in 1943 and 1944? That would be a defeatist pessimism to which we should be reluctant to succumb. The unpardonable sin is the refusal to believe in the possibility of any creative act, in a break with the past in human affairs. The last word in this matter lies, after all, with the Conference of the Party and it has been known to reverse the decisions of the Executive.

The Executive, of course, has a strong case; there is usually a strong case for failure to seize an opportunity. It had been rash in basing its objection to any fellowship with the Communists on the sole ground that their loyalty was pledged to the Third International. That argument lapsed when it was dissolved. But it is not easy to forget the attitude of Communists towards the war against Hitler, which ceased to be a sordid imperialist adventure only on June 22nd, 1941. Experienced members of the Labour Party cherish, with few exceptions, their exasperated memories of past efforts to collaborate with Communists, who possess, none the less, devotion, courage and an almost religious faith, such as the Socialist movement has lacked since the early days of the pioneers. For the sake of these great qualities the less elderly of us are ready to overlook some less admirable peculiarities—a type of obedience which makes them blind to the political situation within their own country, their love of intrigue and their indifference to truth in propaganda. It is faith and youth and daring that the Labour movement needs.

The urgency of this issue, turns, however, rather on its European than its British aspect. Can the delegates forget at Whitsun the irritating memories which made co-operation in their own wards and constituencies difficult, for the sake of the prospect that opens up on the Continent? What the Labour Party does to-day, the Continent, when it is free, will do to-morrow. The Labour Party still enjoys an immense prestige among the world's workers. Thanks to Dover Straits, it alone of all the once-thriving Socialist parties of Europe, still survives in freedom. Not only does it survive; it shares the responsibilities of the War Cabinet and controls a great part of the British war effort. Inevitably what it does or refuses to do will set the pace and fix a standard of conduct for all the Continental parties, which cling desperately to life, some of them in exile, some in concentration camps and some still active "underground." To discourage, as Transport House has now done, consciously or unconsciously, any collaboration between Socialists and Communists is to incur the gravest of responsibilities. That will, however, be the inevitable effect of its decision upon the European parties. Looking into the future, as the hour of liberation approaches, Continental Socialists may have to rely in any danger or difficulty on the collaboration of the fraternal Labour Party, on its Ministers and on its press. But manifestly all that is orthodox in the Party looks (as it did during the Spanish Civil War) on any collaboration between Socialists and Communists with disfavour. To that extent, consciously or unconsciously, it is using its immense prestige and its very great power to discourage fraternisation and keep the Continental Labour movement impotent and divided. In this country Communists are not, even now, numerically a force that counts, though by zeal and hard work, they nearly make up what they lack in numbers. But in France, as in Germany, they were not far below the Socialists in numbers, while in zeal and unity they were incomparably the more powerful party of the two. It is arguable that Hitler could not have succeeded in Germany nor the Municheers in France, but for the feud that broke the Labour movement in two. It is this ruinous feud, heavy with its memories of paralysis, surrender and defeat that Transport House seems bent on perpetuating.

It so happened that Transport House so timed its small-minded decision that it clashed with a rather remarkable appeal for unity which Stalin published last Saturday in the form of an interview. What he had to say about the tactical reasons for the dissolution of the Third International was not particularly impressive. The Third International, we take it, was dissolved because it made for disunity among the United Nations. What was impressive was the plea Stalin made for unity among "the progressive forces" of the "freedom-loving countries." What he hopes to create to-day is "a single international camp" in the struggle against Fascism, which will clear the way for "the future companionship of nations, based upon their equality." It would be easy to miss the significance of these words, which are remarkable for their brevity. They are not, we believe, merely the conventional patter which political leaders talk when they are neither wholly awake nor fast asleep. There is, however, a certain novelty in these phrases, if we assume that the translation is accurate, which suggests a new departure in Stalin's thinking. He realises, as Lenin never did, the power of nationalism over the average man, for it is to "patriots" that he addresses his appeal for unity, and this word, out of fashion on the Left since the Terror in 1793, is underlined by repetition. None the less, it is not to all patriots he addresses himself, but only to the "progressive forces" among them. Finally, what does he mean by "the future companionship of nations"? The word is a new coinage.

There are always two ways of interpreting a declaration of this kind. On a humdrum view it calls for some vague kind of unity, nothing at all approaching the close and formal alliances of the Popular Front period, little more, indeed, than a mood of good will and forbearance, from which the U.S.S.R. should profit. The word "progressive" excludes only the very few—let us say Senators Wheeler and Taft—who wish to exclude themselves. As for the word "companionship," unusual though it is, does it mean much more than the old-world alliance? Such an alliance Stalin already has with the United Kingdom. He would like to extend it to the United States, but someone has explained to him that everything that is traditional in the average, respectable American bristles at the word "alliance": accordingly he uses a milder word. In short, Stalin scrapped the Third International, because he is a tough realist who wants something from the United States, and he knows that the Comintern bred suspicion.

Perhaps that is all. But it is conceivable that the statement has two meanings, in no way incompatible or inconsistent. To American Democrats and Republicans it will mean what we have suggested. But will Socialists go entirely astray if they read into it a rather deeper significance? Stalin was himself a member of the old Social Democratic Party in the days when the International was a living reality. Lenin, in those great days met Jaurès and Bebel in debate and they all assumed that what they decided together would give the signal for action to every genuine worker all over Europe. The movement was in those days what it never was again, after the split which tore it into two quarrelling and contemptuous halves. Was it, then, because Stalin valued its unity and hoped to restore it that he dissolved the Third International? It is also conceivable that he may aim at something more organic, something less discredited by history than the dreary old-world system of alliances and the Balance of Power. For our own part we should be happy if we could confidently attribute this meaning to his statement. When Europeans try to give their "companionship" an enduring and workmanlike form, in the political as in the economic field, we think they will be driven to face some form of federation. And if federation is ever to be more than a scheme on paper, it is from the association of like-minded parties across frontiers that it must draw its life. When Socialist parties are ready to unite with Communist parties and both have the wisdom to draw the peasant parties into their "progressive" alliance, then at last Europe may be fit to federate. This, it may be, the rank and file of the Labour Party will remember at Whitsun.

THE STORY OF THE YUGOSLAV PARTISANS

These three men are Yugoslav "partisans"; they were captured by the Germans in 1942, kept in various camps, and finally escaped to this country. I mustn't describe how they got here, but they are full of praise for British officials who aided them. Gajich is a shoemaker who came from Uzice in Serbia; Arslanagich is a Muslim from Bosnia who once worked for the Yugoslav Customs authorities, and Popovich was a joiner who was working in Rogatiza when the war started. Several of us met these men with a reliable interpreter. Here is the shorthand script of the conversation:

Question. How did resistance first start?

Gajich. The people were pushed into fighting, whether they liked to fight or not. They all felt humiliated and believed that the country had been betrayed by the Government and generals. (That was in April, 1941.) I knew if I did not fight I should be sent to a factory in Germany or to the front. On the 17th July, 1941, I began to fight. People came to our homes and said that we had been betrayed and there was no other alternative but for the people to take up the fight themselves.

Qu. Were these people who came to you Communist organisers?

G. No. Members of all parties (except Fascist parties) were in the movement which had begun all over the country. The first movement was against the Fifth Columnists and all those who collaborated with Germans.

We prepared secret organisations for an uprising, and later left for the forests. The peasants had rifles taken from the disbanded army, and also from the enemy. We attacked the occupying troops and killed them.

Arslanagich had a similar story to tell. He was in the Customs service and remained in his occupation after the military collapse. In July there was a common uprising of the whole people. The Slavs were not willing to tolerate the Germans and would resist anyone who wanted to oppress them. They started to fight the Germans in eastern Serbia, and on November 17th, 1941, the clash between Neditch and the people began.

Popovich was in Vojvodina when the war started. He was taken prisoner by the Germans, but escaped. He went home and in the early period after the German troops arrived it was fairly quiet. Later Pavelich came and started to persecute the Serbs. No Serb was allowed to keep in office. Pavelich also started to wipe out all potential leaders who could raise a revolt so they were again compelled to save their lives by fighting.

Qu. What sort of fighting was it?

P. The first task of the Partisans in the woods was to disarm the Serbian gendarmerie under German command and upset the administration. They especially attacked Communes to get hold of the lists of population to prevent the Germans using them. They burnt the lists.

Qu. What was the strength of the partisan groups?

Gajich answered. In his village thirteen started, and then sent proclamations to the villages inviting people to join them They had companies, battalions, and the highest unit was a detachment consisting of several battalions. They were dispersed by districts, but they had couriers who kept contact between them. Later on they started to move in masses. The strongest detachment in which he served was one which included seven districts, each under its chief, and each chief had six to seven companies of 100 men. So many wanted to join that they could not accept them all as they had not enough armaments. They were all volunteers—there was no obligation to join. The proclamations were published that they would fight until the last occupant leaves the frontiers of Yugoslavia.

In the beginning they just captured arms and munitions from Germans, Italians and local Quislings, but later on they got hold of a munitions factory and themselves produced rifles and munitions, machine guns and hand grenades.

When the Germans left they left behind their stores, munitions, archives, and everything. The Germans tried to escape to the east but were attacked in a pass by another group of partisans—the same tactics were applied all over the country.

Qu. Did the Germans have tanks, aeroplanes and artillery?

Reply. At Uzice five formations of Germans had tanks, 24 aeroplanes and artillery as well.

Qu. Were the villages destroyed altogether?

Reply. It depended; in some cases they completely destroyed them but in others parts of them were left.

Qu. What happened to the women and children?

Reply. When the partisans thought that the village could not be held they evacuated the women and children to other villages.

The Germans offered them the chance to surrender and said they would be free to go home, but most of them refused. Some who swallowed the bait were shot in masses. The people in the villages were sometimes shot and sometimes the Germans shut them into houses, poured petrol on the houses and burnt them.

Qu. What experience did you have of General Mihailovich's forces?

Reply. When the war broke out Mihailovich was with his regiment, about three battalions of his troops, in his district. The Germans sent a force against him, but he disbanded his troops and with the officers escaped into the mountains. He remained quiet from June to September and was not attacked by the Germans. When the partisans liberated the territory and fought the Germans, Mihailovich started to organise the administration in the liberated areas. The partisans received him well, as they thought he would join in and fight with them against the occupying forces.

Mihailovich was asked by the English and by the Yugoslav Government in London not to fight before the British landed and the Germans began to clear out. The partisans replied that they wished to fight the enemy now. They said they would consider it a humiliation not to fight when all the other countries are fighting. That was in September, 1941.

In a small market town in Serbia on September 27th, 1941, Capt. Kosievich Petrovich attacked a detachment of partisans who were garrisoned in a village behind the front, with 2,000 chetniks. Immediately the partisans' supreme command got in touch with Mihailovich by telephone and asked whether the chetniks were his men. Mihailovich denied this and said that they were wild chetniks and not belonging to him. The partisans sent in three or four companies by lorry to this town and after three days of fighting they dispersed the chetniks. Then Mihailovich acknowledged that Captain Petrovich was his man, but promised to hand him over to the partisans for court martial. The partisans and Mihailovich came to an agreement on September 13th.

During the period between July and November, 1941, six agreements were made between the partisans and Mihailovich. But the agreements were always broken. When the Germans attacked at Shabatz the commander of the chetniks stabbed them in the back.

In one action in October, 1941, Mihailovich and the partisans fought on the same side. But in November, 1941, the Quisling paper, *Novo Vreme*, praised Mihailovich. In November also the partisans gave Mihailovich 5,000 rifles from their factory. In the middle of November when the partisans were at the front, Mihailovich attacked Uzice unexpectedly with 5,000 of his troops. During November the partisans fought against Mihailovich until he was beaten and his troops dispersed. He escaped to Valjevo.

The partisans captured one Nedich quisling major and one German officer who were on the way to Mihailovich with a plan of common attack, maps, etc. When Mihailovich was beaten half his troops went over to the partisans and half to Nedich.

It was when Mihailovich was at his lowest point that he was proclaimed in London as Minister of War, November, 1941.

A Slovene leaflet was published denouncing him as a traitor in December.

The Yugoslav people were confused because Mihailovich was collaborating with the Germans at the time when the authorities in London appointed him General and decorated him. At the same time the people were asked to keep their old oath to the King. The Germans dropped leaflets asking the people; "Why should they collaborate and fight with the partisans if the London Government is against them and the Germans as well?" Some said it was no use fighting because the Germans were in agreement with the London Government.

The story was again told of the 350 partisans who were handed over by Mihailovich to the Gestapo and shot.

Popovich first fought in the ranks of the chetniks. Officers, sent by Milailovich, forced them to fight against the partisans. In January, 1942, the officers left the chetniks who then joined the People's Army of Liberation.

There was a great deal of difference between the chetniks and the partisans in discipline. The chetniks were of the medieval type of fighting man, who got drunk and fired bullets into the ceiling, the partisans were very strictly organised.

A question was asked here about the administration of territory freed by partisans.

They make a division between military and civilian organisation. The military carry on the fight behind the lines. The civilians elect their Mayors, etc., or if the old Mayor is a good man he is left in office. The only stipulation is that they cannot elect any man who supported the Yugoslav reactionary regime or a man who was a Fifth Columnist. They set up people's courts, usually of three people. In mixed nationality areas they had one of each nationality. They had to be people with no special party affiliation and they are responsible for judgments. They review sentences. Each military unit has its own bulletins of propaganda material.

The political programme of the partisans is to fight against the armies of occupation and liberate all Yugoslavia not only within state boundaries but all who are under Italians, etc. They have a federal democratic programme.

They bought food from the village population. They captured a lot of food from enemy troops and so supplied themselves. The partisans' rules do not allow any gambling games, intoxicating drink, and no robbing of prisoners of war. The partisans supported the widows and children, even those of Fifth Columnists whom they had been compelled to shoot. No soldier was allowed to take anything from the population, if he did he was shot. Each man had 20 dinars in his pocket in case of dispersion of troops so that he could buy supplies—but they were not allowed to have more than that—all other money was pooled.

All the successes won by the partisans were attributed by the B.B.C. to Mihailovich. One partisan said he listened to the B.B.C. after fighting an action against Mihailovich and was shocked to hear him announced as the conqueror of Uzice, when the action was really fought by the partisans.

A LONDON DIARY

The latest news of the revolt of the Munich students is encouraging. Two great trials before the People's Court have failed to blot out the anti-Nazi organisations in the University and beyond. The official student journal, *Die Bewegung*, in its May issue, reveals months after the first trial, that there is a link between the students and the factory workers. Here is an extract:

> Anyone who in the present times calls the German people to passive resistance, irresponsible elements who want to make German workers commit sabotage in factories and produce unserviceable weapons, will be exterminated in the name of the German people, which is struggling for life. . . .

* * *

It is now also possible to give extracts from the anti-Nazi leaflet which was secretly distributed at the University:

> We demand from the State of Adolf Hitler the restitution of personal freedom, that most precious possession of the Germans, out of which we have been cheated. We have grown up in a State of brutal oppression of all free expression of opinion. The Hitler Youth, the S.A. and the S.S. have tried to regimentate us during the most impressionable years of youth. Future Party chiefs are trained to become godless, shameless and irresponsible exploiters and murderers, blind, stupid followers of a leader.

The authors of the leaflet call upon their fellow students "to fight against the Party. Leave the Party organisations which take from us the right of political expression! Boycott the lectures of the Party professors. We are concerned with true learning and real freedom of thought!"

Even more significant is the passage in which they show a consciousness of responsibility to Europe:

> What Hitler and his confederates mean by freedom and honour they have shown only too well in ten years of destruction of all personal freedom, all freedom of thought and all moral principles of the German people. The eyes of even the most stupid German have been opened by the terrible blood-bath in which they endeavour to drown all Europe in the name of freedom and honour of the German nation. The German name will remain for ever dishonoured if German youth does not at last arise, revenge and atone, destroy its tormentors and help build up a new spiritual concept of Europe. Inspired by a new faith in freedom and honour our people are beginning to rise against the enslavement of Europe by National Socialism.

Here is at least the stirring of "another Germany."

* * *

Until recently this war in Britain was distinguished by the fact that civilians could talk more about high explosives than soldiers. To-day the war has taken on the old familiar shape in which civilians, comparatively safe at home, are removed every day farther away from the feelings and aspirations of the man at the front. This point has just been brought home to me by a long conversation with a friend in the R.A.F. who is back from overseas. He complains that few of us in Britain understand the lives of men in Africa; particularly he complains of the progressive parties and newspapers. He said that those on active service regarded Labour leaders as people who "held the political situation in trust for them." He had always been "Labour," but when he picked up the *Daily Herald*, or his own Trade Union paper, what he found was a great deal of concern about Communist Party affiliation which, he said, meant absolutely nothing to him or any of his friends. What aspect of politics, I asked, did interest them? Well, they were all interested in the post-war world, which still seemed distressingly vague in the minds of politicians. They were particularly interested in Beveridge, because the worst of their post-war worries was unemployment, and here there seemed to be a practical means of social security. He did not suggest that the Beveridge Plan was everything, but to get it complete during the war would be a guarantee that would make worlds of difference to the state of mind of soldiers, sailors and airmen. But, I asked, didn't he and his friends see that the Party machinery and which group of progressive people were making the running in politics might make all the difference to whether he got the Beveridge Plan or not? He doubted whether that cut any ice. The Conservatives were promising Beveridge and so were Labour. If Labour really stood for it and the Conservatives did not, why did not the Labour Party put that over? It was their business to make themselves and any fight they were making against the Tories into *news*. The man at the front would only be interested in the realisation of the scheme, not in which Party gave it them.

* * *

When it was first clear that the Government were havering (or worse) about the Beveridge plan, some of us suggested in this journal that it was a case for a national non-party campaign. On many issues of social change you had to face the charge of splitting national unity during the war; in the case of Beveridge, which in principle had official support, that difficulty did not arise. Here was a broad test of Government *bona fides*; those who attack this ingeniously cheap form of social security on the ground that it is expensive or what not, will reject every other important change. I am glad to see that the idea of a Social Security League has been translated into action. You could not ask for anything more all-party. There are M.P.s of all parties, Hugh Molson and Mrs. Tate, Harold Nicolson, Wilfred Roberts, John Parker, Dr. Haden Guest and Silerman. The Treasurer is Edward Hulton; the chairman Barbara Wootton, and Joan Clarke of the Fabian Society is Secretary. Amongst other names I notice Gerald Barry, G. D. H. and Margaret Cole, Sir Ronald Davison, Dr. Fairfield, Margery Fry, Dorothy Elliott, Mrs. A. V. Hill, Dr. Robson, Seebohm Rowntree and John Roberts. The idea of the League is to foster enthusiasm and create and mobilise opinion round the Report. Already a considerable list of meetings in different parts of the country have been arranged. It costs 5*s.* to be a member, while £1 a year also buys you the publications of the League. Its address is 51 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1.

* * *

Conversation with my R.A.F. friend recalled other opinions I have heard during the last few days. There was the young Conservative who said that the Kingsley Woods and the rest would hold on grimly to a system guaranteed to give us unemployment and prevent the public getting the goods it could produce; that was intolerable and apart from everything else the demobilised troops would not stand it. Then there was the Labour supporter who had reached the point of declaring that as long as the Dinosaurs sat there in Transport House nothing could be done; the Communists at least had the merit of vitality. On the other hand a provincial Labour worker said anything was better than the Communists; they prevented any working-class progress. They turned the whole area into a misery of intrigue and taught the young people, who ought to be interested in Socialism in Britain, nothing except how to shout slogans and sing Russian songs and make violent assertions about the Soviet Union, of which they really knew nothing at all. Then there was the "intellectual," who said that anyway we were moving on to the Great State in which power would be concentrated at the centre; we were doomed, whatever we did, to see the end of the rational era which had developed since the Renaissance, but it was up to us not so to behave that we produced in this country the worst kind of nationalist reaction. It was within our power to keep some human rights even within the Corporate state. Our job was not to worry overmuch about politics, but to maintain individual values and social happiness within small groups inside the Leviathan that was inevitably swallowing us. Note that these different views are not contradictory and that they were all familiar in Weimar Germany. But it is said that the British have a peculiar genius in politics. We shall need it.

* * *

A housewife said to me, *à propos* of the order restricting the movement of soft fruits: "That means that the Minister of Food does not intend us to have any strawberries, raspberries, or gooseberries. We shan't see one. Look at last year, they tell me that the growers let the strawberries rot in the ground, for it did not pay to have them picked. And just see what happens when they control the prices; they must know by now what happens. There hasn't been a stick of rhubarb in the London shops since the day they controlled the price. It just forces people to pay a shilling for a lettuce to get something fresh. If they mean us not to have any fruit, why don't they treat us like grown-up people and say so? Then we wouldn't scrimp and save up our sugar ounce by ounce for jam we'll never be able to make." This point of view is widespread, and discontent goes with it.

CRITIC

AGINCOURT FRONT

"Regarding the filming in Technicolour of Henry V . . . the Agincourt battle scenes are to be 'shot' in Eire. Only there can many hundreds of stalwart men be available to act as supers."—News item, *Manchester Guardian.*

"ONCE more rehearse the scene, good Celts, once more
Let English–Irish lay French–Irish low!
Now think the blast of war blows in your ears
And imitate the action of belligerents;
Stiffen your sinews, think once more of Cromwell,
And so comport yourselves as English yeomen,
That Nazi agents now at work in Dublin
May count them happy you are not their foes!
Think, as you fright the air in County Wicklow,
You sweep the very field of Agincourt!
On, on, you kerns and gallowglasses, on,
Advance, you stout Sinn Feiners, brawny supers
Whose limbs were made in Eire, show us here
That you are worth your wages: which I doubt not,
Are ten times more than those of Harry's bowmen!
And he that doth enact this scene with me,
Let him be never so Republican
He is this day King Harry's follower!
On to the charge! though there is none of you
But hath a neutral lustre in his eye,
And say, this day I act an Englishman!
Now set the teeth, hold hard the breath, and strike!
Follow your leader, and upon your cue
Charge for St. Patrick and the Emerald Isle!

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to N. P. Meadway.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The man who prays most fervently and effectually (James 5.16) may well be the man who, heeding the apostle's instruction, learns through constant reconnaissance just where the prayer arm can be employed to the best advantage.—Hugh Redwood in *News Chronicle.*

Considered as a financial incubus and in so far as it acts as a factor limiting the size of the family, education is a social affectation second only to the motor car.—Letter in *Daily Telegraph.*

London is a town of nice surprises and at any moment you may run into the Queen doing some shopping, or see a swan fly over.—*Nursery World.*

Grandmother, prog.-minded, youngish, seeks week's holiday, June, from grandson, no bombs. Any suggestions?—Advt. in *New Statesman.*

It may now safely be disclosed that when Mr. Churchill went to Congress last Wednesday the weather was brilliantly fine. It was so warm that many men lining the capital's tree-shaded avenues took off their coats.—*Daily Telegraph.*

1848 AND OURSELVES

"A REVOLUTION," said Proudhon, "must know how to create; otherwise it is bound to fail." He was writing of that 1848 which began with hopes so profound, and ended with a disillusion so bitter. There is a tragic sense in which the resemblance between 1848 and our own day is significant. It was preceded, as this war has been preceded, by almost a generation in which the critics of the Left, poets, historians, novelists, even painters, had laid an axe at the roots of bourgeois civilisation. In the twenty years before the advent of Bismarck to power, there was not a single person, statesman or thinker, on the Right whose work was of first-class quality. Metternich was an attitude which had survived; what was living in the Roman Catholic Church had made a romantic, if temporary, marriage with liberalism; even English conservatism, by accepting the leadership of Peel, had unconsciously decided to follow public opinion rather than to direct it. Republicanism in politics, Socialism in economic doctrines, the recognition that large-scale technical change was inevitable and urbanisation the secret of national wealth—all this built a faith in the workmen of London and Paris, in the professors who gathered in the Assembly at Frankfort, in the Carbonari and kindred conspirators, who dreamed of a free Italy, in the revolutionaries, almost everywhere, to whom the very name of Poland was an incitement to action, a faith that, at long last, the harvest of the Revolution was to be gathered and man was to become the master of his own destiny. Even in distant America, there seemed in the new accents of Emerson and Thoreau, of Channing and the men and women who read so eagerly the dreams of Fourier, the hope of a new springtime in the history of the world.

Seven years later it was all like a dream from which men have awakened to a stark reality which forbids even the joy of introspection. Bismarck in Berlin, Francis Joseph at Vienna, Pius IX in Rome, a Britain settling down to the Victorian compromise, a Russia which made all its thinkers prisoners or exiles, an America which drifted relentlessly to the agony of civil war, a Spain in which reaction had not even the air of a romantic past—this is the spectacle with which we are presented. The men who, from 1830 until 1848, had dreamed so greatly, Germans like Marx, Frenchmen like Louis Blanc, Russians like Herzen, Italians like Mazzini, had passed to the dreary poverty of exile, where quarrels in a restaurant in Soho replaced the proud hopes inspired by the faith which ended on the barricades. Why did the promise in which, as Louis Philippe fled, all Western civilisation seemed to share, fade into that bourgeois triumph from which the veil of deceit was only torn with the outbreak of the second World War?

It is time for our generation to examine with some closeness the failure of 1848, for its causes have vital lessons for ourselves. Reaction won, no doubt, because it was stronger than the forces of progress; yet there must have been many men in the streets of Paris or Rome, of Vienna or Berlin, in the February days of 1848 who did not doubt that a new era had dawned for mankind. They failed because, on the Left, their divisions were stronger than the unity which bound them together. They failed because they did not adapt their programme to the problems they faced. They failed because the principles they sought to promote had meaning only for a directing élite, and could be confounded with their antithesis if, as with Napoleon III, they had an enemy skilful enough to take advantage of them. Their legislative assemblies never realised that the purpose of discussion, at least in a revolutionary time, is not the glory of eloquence, but the actuality of decisions. Their politicians did not know that, if they must destroy, it is not less urgent for a revolution to fulfil. Even when, as with the National Workshops, a great principle is given the chance of life, the men who are put in charge of it are chosen in the knowledge that they will arrange, first, its discredit, and then its destruction. Nor is there cohesion, national or international, in the armies of the revolution. They strike without plan and without communication. They have no sense of direction or of discipline. In their inexperience, they leave the initiative to the reaction, and they watch their comrades destroyed nation by nation, in a kind of sullen dismay which does not reach the understanding that popular solidarity is the price of popular victory. Their leaders do not even grasp the elementary fact that a people hungry for freedom cannot be fed endlessly on rhetoric; and they suffer from that defective psychology, produced by long years of opposition, which does not know whether it has scored a success and accepts its enemies as its instruments because it has been so long accustomed to associate them with the tasks of government. Above all, they did not learn that, in a revolution, only those who have the élan which drives to innovation can hope, if they are of the Left, to succeed; for it is in innovation that the masses find courage and the proof that they have the capacity to govern. Delay in experiment, in a revolutionary time, is always the bulwark of reaction; for when men are not pressed to hope, they are driven to fear. The power of property has always lain in its ability to re-establish its claims by postponing the hopes which threatened its dominion.

It is difficult, as one reads the records of those feverish months of nearly a century ago, not to recognise them in the dangers by which we ourselves are confronted. Now, as then, the temper of revolutionary change is abroad; once again it has called social foundations into question. But now, as then, once more the forces of the Left have failed to build a unity of purpose either on the domestic or the international plane. Our leaders, like their predecessors, seek to make a revolution without insistence upon creation. They leave the initiative to their opponents; and they ask men to be content with the flourish of rhetorical trumpets as though it were not one of the chief lessons of our past that they who refuse to act in a crisis see no reason for self-sacrifice when the danger has gone by. A new time has called for new methods; but the leaders of the Left are content to trust their application to administrators who have spent their lives in denying that the new methods were desirable or even possible. New standards of well-being are eagerly sought; but the men who should be insisting upon their application have no anxiety so profound as to persuade their temporary colleagues that they will not see a single hand laid upon those vested interests their colleagues symbolise. Some of them even fail to recognise that the principles of the counter-revolution are being prepared by the men who sit cheek by jowl with them in the cabinets of the United Nations; and they sanction, in a revolutionary war, the exercise of the right to command by representatives of the very ends they are fighting to destroy.

There is, of course, one fundamental difference between 1848 and 1943. The difference is in the existence of the Soviet Union and the domestication of its central idea in the hearts of the masses everywhere. The men of 1848 marched to the barricades with energy and with courage; but the machinery of government and defence broke them in pieces on the barricades. This time the barricade is an idea, and it has behind it a driving force which neither governments nor armies can ultimately arrest. So that the main issue the Left has got to decide is when it will co-ordinate its forces for the victory that is its historic right. It can build forthwith a full understanding with the leaders of the Soviet Union and its people; in that event it gives to the revolution a creative power against which the forces of reaction will hurl themselves in vain. Or it can wait to make its treaty of friendship until the gangsters of Berlin and Rome and Tokio are finally overwhelmed. In that event, the Left accepts the risk, which 1848 showed clearly to be grave and urgent, of losing the favourable moment and giving its enemies the chance of consolidating their strength anew. Delay, as, once again, Proudhon insisted, is the enemy of revolution; now, as in 1848, it will sacrifice creation to the claims of property. If, in the light of an experience so massive, our leaders do not act while there is still time, we can be sure only of two things; there will be a third world-war in our own generation, and the Left will find new leaders more apt to its opportunity. But, if anything is certain in our time, it is that the hand held out to us by the Russian people could join with ours to make the future the common man's fulfilment. That is the obvious inference from nearly a century of effort to achieve his claims. This is the one moment in time when Man the Rebel could become Man the Creator. To let that moment pass unused is a betrayal that will never be forgiven by posterity. HAROLD J. LASKI

THE AMERICAN NEGRO—II

(BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

WHEN early in 1942 Detroit negroes attempted to move in to a Federal housing project that had been officially designated for negro occupancy, they found their way barred by a mob of self-appointed white vigilantes. The police sided with the mobsters, and in the riot which ensued they arrested 215 negroes—and 5 whites. More than two months later the scheduled tenants moved into Sojourner Truth under the protection of armed troops. But the damage that had been done could not easily be undone. The Southerners are on the whole genial and likeable people—much easier to warm up to than are the Northerners. In their relations with their negro domestics they display a paternalism that is certainly not without its charm. But these same warm-hearted and generous human beings somehow regard Jim Crow and lynchings as part of the natural order of things. In my youth I spent some time with my uncle in Arkansas. On my first visit I arrived in town shortly after a lynching had taken place. It was a routine lynching, as lynchings go in the South. Some poor negro suspected of assaulting a white woman had been taken from jail, dragged through the streets behind an automobile, and then covered with petrol and burned at a stake erected in front of the town post office. Even more horrifying than this account was the commentary of my favourite aunt, to whom I am still very much attached: "I suppose you've got to do it sometimes to keep them in their place."

The roots of colour prejudice run deep—much more than skin deep. It is an almost universal rule that people tend to look down on those of darker pigmentation than themselves. The white man looks down on brown man, yellow man, black man; the brown man looks down on the black man; the Indian of light complexion looks down on his countrymen of darker complexion; the mulatto looks down on the full-blooded negro (witness the pathetic advertisements of bleaching creams in the American negro press); the Chinese mandarin and the Japanese noble pride themselves on the ivory superiority of their skins; and Occidental poetry abounds in languorous paeans to the snow-white bosoms of aristocratic ladies. Why this universal stress on pigmentation? Is it because of the elemental tendency to associate whiteness with purity, darkness with evil? Perhaps. On the other hand there are numerous indications that this most stubborn of all prejudices is not of elemental or atavistic origin, but stems rather from palpable economic reasons.

The skin of the plebeian is traditionally dark because until modern times he lived his life exposed to the wind and the sun. The traditionally paler skin of the aristocracy may similarly be attributed to a life sheltered from the elements. As a result of a simple process of association mankind has come to equate pigmentation with social rank. In the case of the negro, colour prejudice assumes a particularly acute form. On the scale of pigmentation his black skin is in sombre harmony with the position he occupies on the scale of economic status. His black skin cries his serfdom aloud. And because his is an entirely different ethnic group, the white man's feeling of social superiority has inevitably been translated into, and in turn augmented by, a feeling of racial superiority. To attribute colour prejudice simply to colour or to the much-hypothesised dislike of the unlike is to argue *a posteriori*. The easy intercourse between Frenchmen and their citizen negroes is by itself sufficient to demonstrate that where social equality exists, racial prejudice does not exist. Evidence may also be adduced from the fact that in the various regions of the United States the degree of negro welfare coincides roughly with the degree of tolerance enjoyed by the negro masses. Every manifestation of racial discrimination is grist to the mill of the Japanese broadcasters. The situation would not be quite so bad if white editors and orators did not insist on portraying the war as a white man's war. When American radio-commentators, quite forgetting our Chinese allies, describe the Japs as "yellow-bellies" or declare that "We shall see what they (the Japanese) can do in a white man's country (Australia) against a white man's army," who can blame the American negroes if they feel that this white man's scorn of colour applies equally to them?

The negroes are asserting their demand for equality in more militant tones than have been heard since the American Civil War. Until recently the most influential negro organisation in the country was the National Association for the Advancement of the Coloured People. The N.A.A.C.P. has performed an invaluable service in the past, but its predominantly middle class leadership suited it for the work of quiet propaganda rather than for the task of leading the negro people in national demonstration. The result was that the leadership of the negro masses largely went over to the organised March on Washington Movement, at the head of which stand two of the country's most prominent negro labour leaders—Frank Crosswaithe, of the Socialist Party, and A. Philips Randolph, President of the Pullman Car Porters' Union. To bring its demands home to the Government in the most forcible manner the Movement conceived of the plan of staging a giant march on Washington. (This threat remains, though there seems no reason to think that any active plans exist to carry it out.) Meanwhile, it has been organising mass demonstrations in all the major cities of the country. The demonstrations at Madison Square Gardens, New York, in 1941 and 1942 were the largest in the long history of the negro struggle.

The significance of the meeting was perhaps best stated by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, head of the Negro Division of the National Youth Administration: "A new negro has arisen in America. He is here in Madison Square Gardens to-night . . . You are no longer begging, you are insisting, because you realise that America, the only country you know and the country you love, cannot be preserved nine-tenths free and one-tenth oppressed."

The Roosevelt Administration has done much, if not enough, for the negro people. In the hearts of the American negro masses the name of Franklin D. Roosevelt occupies a position rivalled only by that of Abraham Lincoln; indeed, it is the President's personality more than anything else that has caused them to abandon their traditional attachment to the Republican Party. But they realise that Roosevelt, strong man though he is, is still in part the captive of his electorate. This electorate includes within itself the most democratic and the most reactionary elements in the community—the trade unions on the one hand, and the Southern whites and the political machines of the North on the other hand. Because he could not entirely ignore the exigencies of electoral politics, Roosevelt, despite his personal sympathies, has consistently opposed anti-lynching legislation—with the reasoning that what is required is education rather than legislation. In the Northern States the President has been able to give some effect to his pro-negro policy. It remains to be seen, particularly in view of the setback suffered by the Democratic Party in the recent elections, whether the President will b ble to implement this policy in the democratic outh, where it really counts most. As far as the rmed forces are concerned, there is reason to elieve that the Administration is already very ear the limit of possible reform. The Southern tates, with their military tradition, provide the ulk of the officer corps.

It is, however, a hopeful augury that while cial prejudice remains as thick as ever, pro-inent people, or at least many of them, are ctively campaigning on behalf of the negroes. n addition to the numerous pronouncements of e Administration, Wendell Willkie and the epublican Party, traditionally the party of lack emancipation, have come out squarely for egro equality. The New York *Times*, the New ork *Herald Tribune*, the Chicago *News*, *Time*, *ife*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, in fact by far e better part of the American press, have eclared themselves on the side of the Administra-on's efforts. To combat prejudice they have un numerous articles, some of them exceedingly ood, on the part that the negro is playing in the ation's war effort. Most remarkable of all was he thorough survey of the position of the negro n the *Survey Graphic* for November 1942.

The trade unions have done much to promote e status of the coloured men. The Steel orkers' Union succeeded in reducing the wage ifferential between South and North to 10 per ent.—a concession which the Southern steel agnates swore would result in their bankruptcy. he United Mine Workers' Union did even etter : they obtained a single national wage scale overing South and North—a project which veryone considered totally unfeasible until the oment the agreement was signed. By further educing the economic differential between North nd South and between black and white, the union re combating race prejudice at its very source.

This is the problem. Beyond the rather trite enerality that moralising will accomplish nothing, at racial prejudice will disappear only when ocial equality has been established, I have not resumed to suggest a solution. That solution for the American people to work out.

(*The first part of this article was published in our st issue.*)

SLICES OF CAKE

"OUR dear Howard," Henry James wrote of is loved Howard Sturgis, "is like a richly ugared cake always on the table. We sit round im in a circle and help ourselves. Now and then e fling a slice over our shoulders to somebody utside."

Henry James was a cake, of course, even more chly spiced and sugared ; and as I am almost the st of the guests who sat on golden chairs round at table, I have been asked to dole out a few ices. The first slice I can now fling comes om the table of Mrs. Humphry Ward, whose ouse in Grosvenor Place Edith Wharton rented, ortly after the outbreak of the war in 1914. was asked to meet Henry James at luncheon ere, and into the room he burst, his great eyes blaze.

"My hands, I must wash them !" he cried, my hands are dripping with blood. All the way om Chelsea to Grosvenor Place I have been yoneting, my dear Edith, and hurling bombs d ravishing and raping. It is my daydream to quat down with King George of England, with e President of the French Republic and the zar of Russia on the Emperor William's belly, ntil we squeeze out of it the last irrevocable, rops of bitter retribution."

Mrs. Wharton, who had come over in a blaze om Paris, said that she must have a seat with the thers. "No, Edith," was the stern reply of this ugust septuagenarian, "that imperial stomach no seat for ladies. This is a war for men only : is a war for me and poor Logan."

"But surely we must discriminate," I mildly ggested to this master of discriminations, surely we must look to the right and left, and proceed, all eyes, with care and strategical caution. This is certainly my war, as I am a naturalised British subject ; but you, I believe, are a neutral, as neutral as Switzerland or Sweden. Why don't you come into it ?" I asked him, as, panting, he paused to wipe the imagined gore from his face, "why don't you enrol yourself as a British subject ?"

More than once, during the winter that followed, I would end with this trumpet-note my colloquies with Henry James on the telephone. "When are you coming into the war ?" I would hiss ; "how long are you going to sit with the Roumanians on a back seat in the Balkans ?"

One day the elaborations of phrase, the parentheses, the polysyllabic evasions, which made a talk on the telephone with Henry James so amazing an adventure, were replaced by a terse query.

"Logan, how—you know what I mean—how do you do it ?"

"You go," I tersely replied, "to a solicitor."

"Of course. I know just the right person" : and this great man of action rang off with a bang that must almost have smashed the receiver.

Edith Wharton and John Sargent, though both of them "deracinated prestidigitors" (as that patriot, Van Wyck Brooks, unkindly calls refugees from America), had still hid on their persons too much in the way of war-paint and feathers to approve of this rough treatment of the American Eagle ; and perhaps Henry James, who, as he wrote to his nephew, had not taken this step till he found that he could no longer go to his house at Rye save as Alien, under Police supervision—perhaps he himself may have heard a few muffled squawks from the moth-eaten old Bird in his bosom. All conversions are followed, religious writers tell us, by reminiscential, even regretful moments ; and most allegiances irk free spirits at times, and make them peevishly tug at the ropes by which they are tethered. Even my long-tested love of the land of my adoption has not saved me from far away echoes of the "Fie, Foh, Fum" of my anti-British boyhood ; and most disconcerting, had I found a remark of George Santayana's, to the effect that he would never cross the Channel again, owing to the rapid Americanisation of England. With these words ringing in my ears (for I had just heard them) I broke the silence between myself and my Chelsea neighbour on one of our walks in this riverside suburb. "Of course," I said, "you know Santayana ?"

"Oh, of course," replied Henry James, "wasn't Santayana a great friend of my brother William at Harvard ? I knew his friends ; I know his crystal-clear prose ; and what you never find in other writers to-day, the touch here and there of the fiddle or the note of the nightingale. I know his thought, as far as a humble old dreamer like myself can know it. I know at any rate the lofty realms where he walks among the high places of European philosophy."

"Then you must often have met him ?"

"My dear fellow, I tell you I have spent days, have spent months in his company. I have listened, and listened long, to the sound of his enchanting conversation."

"The most enchanting in the world, of course," I answered. "So you know him personally ; he comes to see you when he is in London ?"

"To answer your question, my dear Logan, as plainly—and I may say, as brutally—as you put it, I have *not* personally (to use your blunt adverb) met Santayana ; nor shall I ever meet him. He has never rung my doorbell, nor will he ever ring it. He wouldn't ring it even if he were in London ; and now he isn't seen in London any more."

"But I saw him yesterday ; he is now here in person, and is lunching with me to-morrow. Though you don't like blunt questions, I shall permit myself bluntly to ask you, will you come to luncheon to meet him ?"

"COME !" Henry James cried, raising his hands to Heaven. "I would walk across London with bare feet on the snow to meet George Santayana. At what time ? One-thirty ! I will come. At one-thirty I shall inevitably, inexorably make my appearance !"

He was only a minute or two late ; as my sisters and I were shaking hands with Santayana, we saw a taxi drive up. Then we heard heavy footsteps on the stairs, and there was a pause before the drawing-room door opened, and the most portentous of all the personalities I have ever encountered momentously entered. With a rudeness which was perfectly right (for on grave occasions the small coin of good manners must be treated as trash) he ignored us all but the Spanish hidalgo, whom he gravely approached, and laying his arm on his shoulder, "Now tell me," he almost reproachfully queried, "are you really George Santayana ?" When fully reassured on this point, he turned to the rest of us with greetings of elaborate but quite unapologetic courtesy ; and we all went into luncheon.

Our talk was about England. I expressed my life-long satisfaction in being domiciled with so superior a race as the English. "Yes," the Spaniard agreed, "in my opinion the most superior white race, since the Greeks, which has peopled this planet."

And yet, and yet, wasn't Santayana about to say farewell to this island for ever ? And hadn't our other guests just received two bluff, British slaps ? He had certainly been trounced, but a few months ago, by a moral thinker and best-selling novelist, who, in a book called *Boon*, had pilloried his old friend and held him up to public derision. And the year before, enraged British females, with a ferocity even greater than the author of *Boon*—the "phrophet," as Henry James called Wells—had slashed with a knife the great face of his exhibited portrait, and had tried to cut it to pieces. Wasn't it possible that these two encounters with British Philistinism, joined with the unmentionably awful ordeal and yelled-at exposure when he stood before the theatrical curtain in the Nineties ; wasn't it possible, or even probable, that such misadventures might have caused the correct author of so many exquisitely well-bred stories to cast a backward, and perhaps a rueful glance, at the amenity of his previous un-English freedom ? Could a prudish and well-conducted old gentleman swallow without gulping what Henry James had been forced to swallow ?

Having a personal interest in the question, and remembering my own former qualms, I adumbrated a query. Was there any loyalty or transfer of allegiance which could be whole-heartedly accepted without reservation ? Mustn't such things, like all that is mortal, be subject to qualifications, to occasional drawbacks, and even to moments, at least, of disillusion ?

In silence our august guest pondered my question ; nor did Henry James ever impress one as more awe-inspiringly august than in his moments of wordless rumination. He now seemed to be silently shaking (to borrow one of his own metaphors) the bottle into which life had poured for him the wine of experience ; shaking it to taste what lees might be stirred by this oscillation. "Disillusion ?" no, that was not the word to be used of his experiences with regard to these decent and dauntless people. Though much too magnanimous to speak of, or even perhaps to remember, the slaps in the face I have mentioned, he still hesitated over the word "drawback." Well, perhaps there were drawbacks, and especially the one which had forced Edith Wharton to depart from the shores of this island. The numbness and dumbness of tongue-tied people of England ! No good talk, no good general conversation, none of that famous co-operative criticism of life, which was the solace of existence in France and in Italy. "No house any longer in London where fine spirits could gather and wag their tongues freely. No echo of Holland House, nor even of the shoddy Blessington salon. No tirades, no denunciations ; nothing but dreary mumblings and grumblings about politics, diseases and dentists, and insipid duologues automatically turned on and switched off at vapid luncheons and dinners."

As we four sat round that great cake or, as it were, Christmas confection ; as the candles upon it seemed to burn more and more brightly till there was a final outpouring of ignited spirit, I felt that this great combustion was no impromptu performance, but something that was being developed to lead up, for this company and this occasion, to a climax. An anti-climax it seemed. And yet wasn't it in a way a climax? Henry James's voice dropped to a conversational level.

"I am now going to tell you a story," he said, "it's a story I have never told before, and shall never tell again; a story that in decency I never ought to tell.

"But now I shall indecently tell it!

"Some years ago my friend Alphonse Daudet was in London; he often came to see me, and we met at dinners and luncheons. On the last of these occasions when he came to say farewell, 'My dear friend' he remarked, 'I have been observing you carefully for some months; I have met almost all your friends and acquaintances; *et je vois que vous demeurez parmi des gens moins fins que vous.*' That was what he said when he left England for Paris. Oh, for the wings of the dove, I sigh sometimes to follow after him, and after Edith, to that conversational city! But I see I have lingered too late in this pleasant society; at my age one is apt to prolong one's happiest moments. I hadn't the slightest notion how the clock had been ticking. Do you think, Logan, that you could ring up for a taxi for me?"

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

TRINITY

THROUGH the roomy sky to-night
Runs the thready drone of flight,
And the scissor-searchlights close
And open on its tiny throes.

Down the darkened hall of brain
Darts the tiny mouse of pain,
Quick as thought the waking cat
Of levity scoots from the mat.

Elastically catches it,
Statically lets it go
Loose again, but snatches it
Lightly back on its yo-yo.

Till in the vast and breathing hall
A thousand sleepers wake and call
"Curse the cat, and curse the mouse,
And curse, God curse, this bloody house."

God who did send this I to cry
Between two selves on Calvary,
God who in darkness all forlorn
Between two thieving moods was torn,
The nagging cat of thought, the mouse
Of niggling guilt that runs this house
Make these two malefactors one
Within this I
That soon must die,
And then will rise the Sun, the Sun,
The trinity, the three-in-one.

W. R. RODGERS

A QUICK LOOK ROUND

THE isolation brought by war has concentrated our attention upon the qualities of our native painters. These usually are given to meiosis, to gentleness, to suggestion. More sensitive than puissant, they expect the active collaboration of the spectator. They are usually happiest when reflecting our national delight in trees and flowers and oddities of character. (The history of the English School includes no great master of the nude or the still life.) It is therefore a welcome change from our wartime diet to be given at the Redfern Gallery a number of pictures by Mr. Adler. He is an uncommonly accomplished artist, who puts his cards on the table frankly and sometimes over-emphatically. A Pole, he is evidently anguished by the sufferings of his compatriots, particularly the Jews, but his Rabbis are not his best subjects. The influence of Picasso is strong—but Mr. Adler's sense of colour is distinctive, and he is particularly clever with pale and muddy tones. His texture is often rich. This is not a sort of painting that I personally find very congenial, but Mr. Adler strikes me as a painter who would deservedly excite respectful attention in Paris or New York.

The Lefevre Gallery, abandoning at any rate for the moment their recent policy of exhibiting pictures by other dealers, has a roomful of works by Mr. Colquhoun. Masson and Wyndham Lewis have left their mark on him, but what I like particularly is his sense of colour. Sometimes his pictures seem rather thin, because they are so little based upon observation. It would be interesting to see what he could make of a large decorative scheme. He handles pigment in a highly painterly way, and his invention is pleasing if not very intense or various. Certainly one of the most promising of the youngest generation. Also at Lefevre, a mixed show, including excellent examples of Peploe, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Edward le Bas and Graham Sutherland.

Pic, at the "Modern Gallery" in Charles Street, exhibits not the charming little pictures with which he made his name, but large works in which agreeable handling hardly compensates for absence of incident. He is vastly tasteful, using even the cracks in a wooden panel to emphasise his effects. But when an artist depends so entirely on good taste and a touch of fantasy, it seems injudicious to inflate the results to museum size.

Messrs. Agnews are showing an assembly of English pictures, many of them of the dining-room type. Two small Constables are the gems of the collection, a Holland is a good specimen of an underrated painter, the Ward is a splendid work that ought to catch the eye of some alert museum-director. The Reynolds of the Marquis of Granby is beautifully painted.

The Nicholson Gallery has nineteenth century English water-colours and drawings, ranging from Gainsborough to Mad Martin, Thackeray and Caldecott. A pleasant exhibition. And, finally, the Civil Defence artists are to be congratulated on reaching their twelfth exhibition. It includes a fine landscape by William Scott, and pleasing pictures by Frederick Cook, Peggie West, Anthony Devas, as well as by the C.D.A. regulars.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Shadow and Substance," at the Duke of York's Theatre

Shadow and Substance, by Paul Vincent Carroll, is a fine play, with no loose ends. It is "strong" because it is well-built, not because it is emotionally noisy. A fair section of Dublin opinion found it the best Abbey play since *The Playboy,* and its two-year hold on the New York public is not difficult to understand. In England, the conflicts and contrasts on which it is built up might seem remote: they belong to the Catholic scene—the aim of the London production has therefore been, wisely, abstract theatrically rather than naturalism. Less happily, here and there, there is playing-down to the London demand for pathos and minor comedy, to which some essential harshness is sacrificed.

The scene is the parish priest's house in a small Irish town. Canon Skerrit is the old-type Irish priest, whose Catholicism is civilised, classic and European, and who suffers with very unequal temper his pair of Maynooth curates, sacred oleographs and the complacent inanities of his parishioners. His official enemy, the young agnostic schoolmaster, is by temperament most nearly his friend. His avowed friend is his child-servant, Brigid—but Brigid defaults unwillingly: she maintains, through visions, a mystic relationship with her name-saint. What begins as sheer inconvenience ends up in tragedy. Ironically, it is to the schoolmaster that Brigid's exaltations seem least shocking . . . The relationship between the young girl and the Canon is drawn with authority, without sentiment. Mr. Malcolm Keen, as the Canon, is to be praised; he does not strike a false note. Miss Joyce Redman's Brigid was moving; she held the theatre, playing with strength and sweetness—if, here and there, her avoidance of dream-child technique was not by much more than a hair's breadth. Messrs. Hutchinson and Byrne, as the curates, were excellent; Mr. Denis Carey's schoolmaster was effectively realised; the supporting character-players were adequate. The set depicted a costly Anglican parsonage looking on mountain country—one wondered why—and the lighting flickered too much.

"Assignment to Brittany," at the Empire

Hollywood can still teach us a thing or two abou war. How to blow up the most important U-boa base is the lesson of *Assignment to Brittany.* It can b done as follows: Find the exact double (Pierre Aumont) of a missing Frenchman, and drop him i Brittany, where he will take up the other's life, involving a mother, a fiancée and a mistress, and discover the U-boat base. The Commandos land. No opposition on the beaches. Scaling the cliff they shoot the sentries with bows and arrows. The U-boa base is then captured, the submarines are blown up, and Pierre Aumont and his "fiancée" escape to England singing the *Marseillaise.* Next assignment, Italy?

The film isn't perhaps quite so bad as it sounds. It has charm and will thrill some people and give others a laugh. Specially recommended to strategists.

Correspondence

C.P. AFFILIATION

SIR,—The writer of the article "Unity in Britain" would not have come so unhesitatingly to the conclusion that we ought to change our minds abou Communist affiliation as a result of the dissolution o the Comintern if he had not failed to make the proper inference from his own admissions early in his article, that "no one supposes that the abolition of the Third International will of itself make members of th Communist Party less inclined to disregard all other interests than those of the Soviet Union. No one supposes that the British Communists have changed their views or their scale of values merely because they have been freed formally from an international obligation which they were pledged to put first."

If this is admitted, why should we assume that th "unscrupulous tactics employed against those wh should have been allies" and "the local and nationa intrigues" promoted by the C.P. in the past will no be repeated? If, in fact, Communists still feel tha their main or only obligation is to Russia, and if—as may well be the intention—their directives will stil come from Russia, but underground, then they wil behave in the future as they have in the past; especially as the disappearance of the Comintern does not change the nature of the military discipline of the C.P. or th readiness of its members to submit to that discipline.

No question of this kind can be sensibly settled without taking into account the character of the peopl who are asking for such close connection with us We should be foolish to ignore this personal side.

But that does not mean that we should "ostracis Communism at home and collaborate with it abroad." This is to talk as if the only way of collaborating wit another body is actually to admit it into your own There is the obvious and prudent alternative of jus collaborating—on specific issues; and there ar plenty of these, from Beveridge to the nature of th peace settlement, which, if it is settled by Tory representatives—even on behalf of a National Governmen with Labour adhesion—will probably land us in third world war. The agenda of the Whitsun Conference contains an amendment to this effect.

When we have had experience of such collaboratio and have found that Communists are no longer wha we have found them to be in the past, but that ther has been a real change in "their scale of values," the will be the time to accept their offer to affiliate.

In the meantime, it is an illusion to imagine that th admission of the Communists would automaticall lead to more energetic leadership. The lack "energy" in our leaders is not due to any lack enthusiasm, courage or insight within the Labou Party; there is plenty of all three in the constituenc parties, and it has on occasions—as during the Spanis War, when the Labour Spain Committee came int being—made itself felt. But not even the addition Communist enthusiasts to this rank and file ginge element will produce better leadership as long as comes—as it must do under the L.P. Constitution—from Trade Union leaders who are answerable only a mass-membership which is not politically minde Only the conversion of the T.U. rank and file Socialism can do that.

C. BLACK

SIR,—Much of the argument against C.P. affiliation to the Labour Party seems to proceed on the assumption that the British Labour movement was a happy band of brothers until some evil-disposed persons in Moscow for the sheer pleasure of disruption started the Communist International.

This, of course, is not the case. Ever since the 'eighties of the last century, Marxists, who believed that only the victory of the workers in the class struggle could bring Socialism, have had to face the task of working in and with a Labour Movement which owed its being to the class struggle, but whose official leaders were mostly not Marxists and often not even Socialists.

Prior to 1914 the question was in a way to solve itself. The federal constitution of the Labour Party made it possible for any Socialist body, Marxist or non-Marxist, to enter the Party by affiliation and prove its mettle by practical co-operation. But the last war accentuated and embittered old differences by driving a wedge between those who saw in it a war of defence and those who saw in it only an Imperialist swindle. That was the beginning of the present disunity. The formation of the Communist International was only a consequence.

Now that all sections, Marxist and non-Marxist, agree on the necessity of fighting the present war to a victorious finish, the Communist International is logically dissolving itself. This does not mean that Communists have repudiated Marx and Lenin. It means that they put first things first. As an old Socialist who was in the Labour Party for fifteen years and has been in the C.P. for five, I am unable to see why the federal constitution of the Labour Party which was broad enough to admit Marxist bodies before 1920, is not broad enough to admit the C.P. now. As to the "open sore" of 1939-1941, if it is no bar to co-operation with the U.S.S.R., whose line we followed, why should it be a bar to co-operation with us?

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

5 Frenchay Road, Oxford.

SIR,—I agree with you that "the argument that must turn the scale" in the question of Communist affiliation is "the unity of the working class." But you do not state the issue fairly at all.

Those of us who oppose C.P. affiliation do so precisely because we are convinced that it will create serious disunity, if forced upon the Labour Party by what will inevitably be a slender majority. This conviction does not arise from any legalistic interpretation of the statutes of the defunct Comintern—which after being dead for years, has now decided to lie down and be decently buried—nor is it based on any disagreement with the political and social creed of Communism.

Our opposition to affiliation arises, quite simply and inevitably, from long experience of the habits and behaviour of British Communists. In particular, the systematic and continuous employment of "fractionalist" tactics in the Labour Movement by the Communists. These tactics are not merely the result of lack of scruple: they are derived from the fundamental delusion of the Communists that it is their historic function to provide the "leadership" of the mass movements of the working class. So long as this delusion persists; in other words, so long as the Communists go on behaving as a kind of Socialist *herrenvolk*, for just so long will any real unity between them and the lesser mortals who compose the ranks of the Labour Party be for ever impossible.

J. STEWART COOK

SIR,—Why not admit that the closing down of the Third International is a defeat for the international working-class movement and that the congratulatory obituary notices in the press, from the *Times* to the *Daily Mail*, on its demise are hardly those in which people interested in Socialist progress should join? Stalin, as a good general, may know when it is wise to retreat, but it is absurd to call a retreat a victory. The parading in the *Daily Worker* of quotations from the approving *Times* must have made Lenin turn in his embalmment. The last war killed the Second International and the present one has destroyed the Third. Another, and one hopes an all-embracing one, will arise in its place. Meanwhile, must we join our political enemies in their rejoicings on the failure of a world Socialist mission?

J. DEANER

PLAIN SPEAKING

SIR,—I am afraid Mme. Zahorska has not met my point about the Atlantic Charter. It is simply this: The Atlantic Charter imposes only the same obligation on the Soviet Union that it does on the other signatories to the United Nations Pact, namely to found the peace settlement on the principle that there shall be "no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." This, as Mme. Zahorska says "is a matter of principle, and not limited to the question of Poland's frontier."

Mme. Zahorska applies this principle to the Soviet Union, and says that it means the obligation to surrender certain territories that the Soviet Government regarded as under their sovereignty before they were over-run by Hitler. Very well, does she consider that the Atlantic Charter imposes the obligation on Poland to surrender Teschen, the territory of which Colonel Beck despoiled Czechoslovakia at Munich? Or that it imposes the obligation on Great Britain to surrender Burma, Malaya and Singapore, or on the Netherlands to give up the Dutch East Indies, or on the U.S.A. to abandon the Philippines?

If she believes the Atlantic Charter means all that, she is at least consistent, although singular, in her belief. But she really cannot get away with the contention that the Atlantic Charter imposes an obligation on the U.S.S.R. which does not apply equally to the other signatories!

She is even less happy in invoking the Atlantic Charter in support of Pilsudski's old dream, apparently still cherished in certain Polish *émigré* circles here, of partitioning the Soviet Union. For that is the meaning of her suggestion that the principles of the Charter should be applied "to the question of Ukrainian and White Ruthenian independence. The Ukrainian nation numbers 40 million, of whom not quite 5 million were under Polish rule. *There was a very strong Ukrainian nationalist movement in Poland, its declared aim being independence for the Ukraine.*" (Italics mine).

The movement referred to in the last sentence was a purely bourgeois affair. It was fostered by Poles who should have known better, and has since been taken charge of by Hitler for his own purposes. It never had any roots in the Ukrainian masses on either side of the frontier.

A LABOUR CANDIDATE

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

SIR,—"Critic" hopes that Chuter Ede will sweep away "the survival of the days of Dickens," meaning primarily the snob private school. Good, but the same broom will sweep away the pioneer school. If "Critic" sees any value in the pioneer school what does he propose we do about it? Put it under State control? O.K., then I see myself having to approach some official in the Education Office with a humble petition . . . "Please, sir, may I have a little pioneer school?" It will be a miracle if the official is a pioneer himself, for the executive mind isn't necessarily a creative one, and he will have the power to say "No; we have complete confidence in our State Education." But postulate that he is a pioneer himself. He allows me to carry on with State funds, and my tune will be called by Whitehall, and inspectors will visit me and offer command "suggestions."

The obvious retort is: If we give you private (school) enterprise in education, we'll have to carry on the capitalist system and allow the same private enterprise all round. The snag in socialism will be totalitarianism. We shall all have to obey the laws of the State scientists, doctors, educationists, and accept pasteurised milk, medical drugs, municipal schools. One solution would be: "You can pioneer if you like but not for profit," . . . and I can hear the weary pioneer sadly ask: What is profit anyway?

I wrote to Harry Pollitt asking where the educational pioneer would stand in Soviet Britain, but got no reply. I hope that some less busy member of the C.P. will give a reply in these columns.

A. S. NEILL

Summerhill School, Ltd.,
Festiniog, N. Wales.

[The proposal is to lay down a minimum standard of accommodation, education and health, and acquire the power to send inspectors to see that children are not cruelly treated and underfed, and that they do learn (however experimental their education in other directions) the simple techniques without which no one can be an efficient citizen. Does Mr. Neill object? No one, as far as we know, proposed the abolition of the pioneer schools. ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SHAKESPEARE AND CHRISTIANITY

SIR,—Now that Mr. Massingham has questioned Mr. Raymond Mortimer's pronouncement on Shakespeare and Christianity in his review of my *Elizabethan World Picture*, may I add a few words? There are two questions: one, whether Shakespeare sympathised with Christian ethics, the other whether he was educated in Christian dogma. Mr. Mortimer, in his review, thought I supported the first notion, when actually I dealt with the second alone. My point (too obvious to need making if it were not sometimes ignored or denied) is that Shakespeare and the other Elizabethans lived in a world permeated by Christian theology: they could accept or repudiate that theology, but they could not ignore it. In just the same way Mr. Mortimer may love or hate the doctrines of Freud, but he cannot ignore them; though this will not necessarily prevent some future admirer of Mr. Mortimer refusing to admit that Mr. Mortimer could have had any contact with the Freudian virus.

From Shakespeare's knowledge of Christian dogma, which is surely a matter of fact, Shakespeare's sympathy with Christian ethics (so ably maintained by Mr. Massingham) should, as a matter of conjecture, be kept separate.

E. M. W. TILLYARD

Jesus College, Cambridge.

WHAT CAN IT POSSIBLY MEAN?

SIR,—Mr. Robert Graves's new game is irresistible. His reply to Mr. Stonier is short, yet it contains five examples of the kind of writing he is pretending to criticise:

(1) "Mr. Stonier . . . does not make it clear that the book purports . . ." etc. What is the "it" that is not made clear? And how can a review make anything clear? Is a review a duster, or a lens?

(2) "If Mr. Stonier had been conscious of the reader over his shoulder." How does Mr. Graves know that there was a reader over Mr. Stonier's shoulder when Mr. Stonier wrote his review?

(3) "So obscure a sentence." How can a sentence be obscure? How thick is it? What is it made of?

(4) "I sold him a best seller." Mr. Graves is far too wise to sell a book to a publisher. I'll bet a thousand pounds that he granted the publisher a licence to publish.

(5) "The reviewers—who had a grand time." How can you have a time? How can time be grand?

Mr. Graves's snowball will not easily be stopped. But he has started it rolling too soon. The "silly season" does not usually begin until July.

A LITERARY AGENT

P.S.—What (before Mr. Graves asks) is a literary agent? Do I mean an author's agent? Yes.

THE BEVERIDGE PLAN:

Where Are We Now?

The two-page article by G. D. H. Cole, which appeared under the above title in our issue of March 27th, has been reprinted, with additions and a Table, in the form of a pocket-sized 16 pp. pamphlet, and is published to-day, price 3*d*., postage 1*d*. (Post free for six or more copies. Special quotation for 50 or more copies.)

This small pamphlet is not a summary of the Beveridge Report, but compresses into as little space as possible a summary of what the Government has promised, and not promised, to do about the Beveridge Plan. It will be especially helpful to those who are seeking to concentrate public attention in order to secure the Government's acceptance of the Beveridge Plan as a whole.

NEW STATESMAN & NATION,
10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

It is difficult for us of our time and generation to appreciate Carlyle. So many things come between us and him. In the first place that appalling style, with its repetitiveness, its over-emphasis, its perpetual note of adjuration, its shrillness, and exaggeration, with no soft tones at all, the trumpets always braying and that rather discordantly: it makes him almost impossible to read. Then there is the insensitiveness, the dislike of art for itself, of music and painting, the philistinism of the Scotch peasant. And, no less serious, there is his German monomania, the confusion about what he thought of the relation between Might and Right, his intellectual muddle. There is no doubt that the Victorians overrated him; and that current textbooks on the literature of that age are quite wrong in placing him at the head of it. (Newman, for whose intellect Carlyle expressed great contempt—so much the worse for him—should take a much greater place than he does: in some ways his mind foreshadows the subtlest and most crucial intellectual issues of our time.)

For all his defects Carlyle was unmistakably a man of genius. He was that very unattractive kind of genius, a prophet. All prophets are misfits; and that throws a flood of light on the source and conditioning of their "message." (Perhaps one should not complain of their repetitiveness, or what would become of the books of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, etc.—or for that matter, of Marx and Lenin? Repetitiveness is one of their strongest weapons, the way they get their message across.) But the very fact of their being misfits means that they see more vividly certain shortcomings and defects in society and people around them. It also means that they often miss the unobtrusive good which is being done quietly by ordinary folk to whom they give no credit. What the understanding of their prophetic character in terms of modern psychology does is to make us chary of accepting their *judgment* about the things they so vividly, so vehemently (and often so usefully) condemn. Judgment is precisely what they have not got; what much despised statesmen like Peel and Gladstone and regular thinkers like Mill had, Carlyle not. On the whole, considering his vehemence, and how much he lived by his intuitions, it is remarkable how much he was in the right.

Anyone who wishes to tackle Carlyle anew—for it is a question of tackling: one cannot promise pleasure—might do best to take *Past and Present* as an introduction. The centenary of its appearance falls this spring. It is a book very symptomatic of its time and still has something to say to us to-day. It is the best and the most balanced of the books Carlyle devoted to the Condition-of-England question, which so exercised men's minds in the eighteen-forties and left such a mark upon contemporary literature.

And well it might! For the hungry Forties were the turning point in the development of the Industrial Revolution, a dark and dangerous tunnel which the country had to traverse before it emerged into the daylight and prosperity of the Victorian era proper. There was mass unemployment on an unprecedented scale, fruit of the maladjustment of the new powers of production to the mechanism of distribution; the price of corn soared while men went hungry in the country districts no less than in the towns; the discontent of the working class expressed itself in the agitation of the Chartist Movement, that of the new middle class in the campaigns of the Anti-Corn Law League. It was a very disturbed decade, which culminated, on the Continent, in the revolutions of 1848. All these forces the writers of the time were conscious of in their different ways, Dickens, Disraeli, Tennyson, Arnold, Clough. In his *Life of Carlyle*, Froude has a most interesting passage on the intellectual ferment of those years, and what it was that made younger men like himself turn to Carlyle.

Carlyle focussed these discontents and gave them expression in a way which arrested attention. It is not that the thoughts which he had were very original; the actual thought is not subtle, or remote, or difficult, but simple and even platitudinous. It was his way of putting it that was striking, his vehemence and sincerity. And he had a peasant's horse-sense about ideas: his intuitions were often more right than the intellectual views of the academic thinkers—for example, about *laissez faire*, the Poor Law and Factory Legislation. The sublime certainty and self-righteousness of the Victorian economists has a modon parellel in the equally fatuous fanaticism of some L.S.E. economists against any form of economic planning in our time. (Or rather a few years ago; for this is old history already. Carlyle, for all that he was on economist, was often quite right as against these *a priori* second-raters.

He begins his book with the contrast of an England wealthier than it ever had been before and yet with two million people out of work, in workhouses "pleasantly so-named because work cannot be done in them . . . they sit there, pent up, as in a kind of horrid enchantment," or in receipt of out-door relief. It is a very impressive beginning that his book has; he had been shocked by the scenes of want he had witnessed in East Anglia the autumn before on his ride through it in pursuit of material for his *Cromwell*; he was still more shocked by the condition of things in Glasgow, Manchester, Stockport and elsewhere revealed by the papers and blue-books, the reports which Edwin Chadwick was beginning to compile and of which Marx was to make such use later. He went on to point to the dilemma of over-production and under-employment which is a recurrent trouble of *laissez faire* capitalism. He put it very effectively: so many shirts that "hang there by the million unsaleable; and here, by the million, are diligent bare backs that can get no hold of them." The operatives who made them are in want, without bread; and yet "there is not a horse in England, able and willing to work, but *has* due food and lodging; and goes about sleek-coated, satisfied in heart. And you say, It is impossible." Carlyle replies: "It is impossible for us to believe it to be impossible," and to those who are responsible, he says: "Do you depart quickly; clear the ways soon, lest worse befall."

He addressed himself to the aristocracy, the ruling class; quite rightly, for they had all the power and only they could amend it. It is interesting that the mission of this son of the people should have been directed to the upper and middle class; and that Marx and Engels, those scions of the middle class, should have turned to the people. Both had their influence in different ways; it would be a pity to exclude the effect of either upon the social amelioration which was a grand feature of the nineteenth century. Carlyle appealed to the conscience and political interest of the rulers; Marx and Engels did their best to organise the workers to push themselves. (They must have been wonderfully disillusioned after a lifetime of entertaining such hopes of them.) Carlyle, with more immediate point, tells the ruling class that since they are in possession of the land, they owe it good governance; and if they did not do their duty, worse consequences would follow. He always had the vision of the French revolution at the back of his mind. So had they, and in fact, in the confusion of the Forties, led by Peel, the "pilot who weathered the storm," they did not do so badly. The English governing class gave this country infinitely better leadership in the nineteenth century than the governing classes on the continent gave their countries.

There were, of course, spells of faltering leadership as at the end of Whig rule in the late Thirties, or the way in which we muddled into and through the Crimean War. Carlyle hated the popular humbug of the age and the politicians whose ideas of leadership were publicity and playing down to the mob. He has an excellent ironical portrait of Sir Jabesh Windbag, type of all these. "Windbag, weak in the faith of a God, which he believes only at Church on Sundays, if even then; strong only in the faith that Paragraphs and Plausibilities bring votes; that Force of Public Opinion, as he calls it, is the primal Necessity of Things." The regular type of the politician who tells the people what the people like to hear, until they wake up and find themselves where they did in 1939-40. Have you never, dear reader, come across a Sir Jabesh Windbag in our time?

Carlyle's anti-democratic bias is well known. But in this book it is held in restraint; he does not lose all sense of balance as in his later political writings, *Latter Day Pamphlets* and *Shooting Niagara*. In *Past and Present* he is content to insist upon the need for sincere, candid, able leadership.

In these years, while he was writing *Cromwell*, he had the great days of the Commonwealth all the time before his mind. Since he knew that in fact only a few rule, he was above all anxious that the right ones should be chosen. Liberty he attached less importance to than economic security: in that a true man of the people. "Liberty, I am told, is a divine thing. Liberty, when it becomes the 'Liberty to die by starvation' is not so divine." It is here that Carlyle links up with the socialist trend of thought in his age. He goes further: "Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out the right path, and to walk therein. To learn, or to be thought, what work he actually was able for; and then by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same."

This leads on to his gospel of work. "Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony, the instant he sets himself to work! . . . Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work; a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it." Carlyle had been struck by the mediaeval Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds and its portrait of Abbot Samson, who bore rule there nobly and restored the fortunes of the house: a fine figure of a man such as Carlyle loved, the hero, as man of religion, one might say. This middle section of the book, the historical, which most people will find the most readable, sets off the rest of the book very well. Carlyle, who had such difficulties with his writing and filled the house at Cheyne Row and his correspondence with his groans, had no difficulty with *Past and Present*: he wrote it straight off at white heat in the first seven weeks of 1843.

There is a good deal in the book which we may take to heart in the difficulties of the period of social transition to which we are committed. It may be that, for all the unattractiveness of the role, what we shall need is, as in Carlyle's time, a prophet who does not fear to say the unpopular thing.

A. L. Rowse

THIS WAS SPAIN

The Spanish Labyrinth. By Gerald Brenan. *Cambridge University Press.* 21s.

Mr. Brenan is one of those rare students of contemporary life who can recognise the traditional pattern which the loom of history is weaving under our eyes. The Republicans called themselves "loyalists" and their opponents boast in the title of their party their fidelity to "tradition." In all they did, the leaders seemed to be repeating gestures and movements which earlier generations had handed on unchanged, like the accents and idioms of their Roman language. Are they more traditional than other peoples? This, at least, we may safely answer: that their isolated Peninsula escaped the influences of the industrial revolution much longer than any other portion of Western Europe, while the Inquisition stereotyped its mental life in the mould of a vanished age. The strangest aspect of this national character is that it is discernible on both sides, even when they are locked in a struggle that admits of no solution save mutual extermination. "Nothing," as Galdos says, "is so like a rising of Spanish revolutionaries as a rising of Spanish reactionaries "—an aphorism which may describe their behaviour with some approach to truth, so long as they act instinctively. But in the recent Civil War the Left used its intellect to discipline its traditional instincts. After the early months it did try to stop the carnage, whereas the blood-lust of the Right is not sated yet: it showed in its social programme caution and moderation, and Dr. Negrin strove with manifest sincerity for a peace of reconciliation.

Mr. Brenan has refrained in this book from doing what no one could have done better: he does not recount the history of the Civil War, though he does give us a summary survey of its political aspects, which is valuable in spite of its brevity, because his judgments are as impartial as they are clear cut. What he does is rather by an analytical review of recent Spanish history to familiarise us with the heritage of problems that vexed the Peninsula, the records and the collective personalities of the parties which sought to solve them and the character of landscape, soil and climate which made the background of this sombre tragedy. Mr. Brenan has himself spent some years working as a practical farmer in Spain. This experience may account for his masterly insight into the many problems that arise from the land. He avoids any dogmatic onesidedness; for while he compels us to see vividly before us, all the time, the half-starved peasantry on the vast estates of the arid South, he is equally aware of the intellectual and emotional character of Spanish politics. Spaniards, he tells us, always fight for an idea and can understand no other *casus belli*: they have never acquired the materialistic scheme of values that dates elsewhere from the mercantile revolution. None the less, it is the land, the varying rainfall and the types of husbandry and land-tenure appropriate to each climatic region that account for the basic realities of politics. The fairly damp climate of the Northern zone favours the small mixed farm, based either on peasant ownership or else on a tolerable system of share-cropping and makes for the sturdy, conservative individualism of the Basques. Valencia, entirely dependent on irrigation, is with its three crops a year, the richest garden of Europe. The parched South and South-West is necessarily the region of *latifundia* and could prosper again only if the broken irrigation system of the Moors were restored and the dead hand of the functionless grandee withdrawn. It was Spain's misfortune that the element in her population which unified her and supplied her ruling caste came from the rocky plateau of Castile. These uplands favour shepherds rather than farmers. The Castilians, remote from the mercantile life of ports and the agricultural life of plains and valleys, could rule only by a principle of authority and always ended by coercing communities which they would not foster and could not understand—notably the Basques and Catalans.

Mr. Brenan's sense for history helps us to realise why the land question has become so desperate in Spain. The really vital social organism in Spain is still the *pueblo*, the prehistoric village commune which survives intact to this day in some districts of the North and still carries out a periodic redistribution of the communally owned fields, arable as well as pasture, every few years. The Church, while it was still mentally alive in the late sixteenth century, preached an Agrarian Communism, such as its missions actually established in Paraguay. The Anarchists who set up their collective farms during the Civil War, nearly all of them popular and well-run, were satisfying a deep traditional instinct. The Liberals put themselves wrong with the masses because they did in the 19th century what the corresponding class in England had done much earlier: not content with appropriating the lands of the Church, they grabbed the common lands also. The workers, after this essay in reform, felt little enthusiasm for Parliaments. On this exploit, and not on trade (save, indeed, in Barcelona and Bilbao) the power of the middle class reposes. It consists not of *entrepreneurs* but of rent receivers. And so it happens that in the South the average estate amounts to 2,000 acres. The labourers who till it are unemployed for more than half the year and in their hovels, where they eat like animals on the ground, no furniture is to be found save a cooking-pot. The solution, Mr. Brenan argues, must lie in communal ownership, mechanisation and irrigation—perhaps on lend-lease terms. It might not lead to great riches, but what Spaniards value is rather a life of dignity and self-respect than of opulence. Like Quixote, as Mr. Brenan reminds us, they see the Golden Age in the past, when men lived happily on acorns.

After the land-question there are two further tests to which any book about Spain must submit. Does it help us to understand the savage hatred of the masses for the Church, and does it bring us into closer intimacy with the Anarchists—the Carlists of the Left, as traditional, as defiantly idealistic, as reckless, as characteristically Spanish as the men of Navarre who fought for the Inquisition and a king who would light its fires again? Mr. Brenan survives both ordeals and, indeed, the clue to the Anarchists may lie hidden in the Church. He gives us two keys which help us to interpret them. Their rage against the Church was really that of intensely religious people who felt that it had deserted and deceived them. That is, I think, a true description of the attitude of those among them who are of peasant stock. They are austere, puritanical, even ascetic in their morals. They despise money and their first revolutionary act was always to make an end of it. They were especially proud of their powerful trade union, the C.N.T., because it had no paid officials and gave neither benefits nor strike pay. As for the intellectuals among them, Mr. Brenan may be right when he says that they reflected the rage of sensitive men on their first contact with the industrial age; the only thing a decent man could do was to protest, whether by writing epigrams or throwing a bomb. On the whole Mr. Brenan, while paying a warm tribute to their agricultural co-operative communities, finds this attitude sterile and unconstructive. I should have to add several more exceptions before I could endorse that verdict. I witnessed their astonishing success during the Civil War in running factories with high principles as their chief equipment, and I was deeply moved by the schools they established for the sorely tried children of Madrid.

As for the Church, it offended this nation of individualists and idealists in several ways. It was, like the army, first of all a buttress of the parasitic landed class. It had become little more than a Customs House which levied its tolls on wayfarers in transit from this life to the next. It stood, moreover, for a principle of authority which it recommended neither by good works nor by its services to learning. Perhaps we cannot be reminded too often that in Spain as late as 1827 a man could be hanged for professing Deism, while up to 1836 the universities, which this obscurantist Church governed, still refused to concede the truth of the circulation of the blood: for was not Harvey a heretic?

Mr. Brenan is above all the historian whose purpose it is to throw a refracted light upon the present from the past. His judgments, though bold and decided, are happily free from prejudice. He deals, it seemed to me fairly, with the curiously mixed record of the Communist Party during the Civil War. While endorsing his

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criticisms, I should have said more about its astonishing success in bringing order and realism into the military conduct of the struggle. He ends with a little sketch, all the more memorable because he draws it in a few deeply incised lines, of the ruin over which Franco presides. About the future he is so far cheerful that he insists that no government which has to depend on the Church, the army, and the landlords can count on a long life in Spain. For the throne he has no good word to say, and points out that since 1789 not a single reign ran a natural course. It remains, in thanking Mr. Brenan for a book of unusual insight, to mention its admirable style, always lucid, vivid and concrete.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

EL DORADO FOR SCHOOLS

Coricancha: Garden of Gold. By A. F. TSCHIFFELY. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 10s. 6d.

The story of the conquest of the Inca Empire is one of the great tragic stories of history. An awful fatality creeps upon its episodes as they are built up to the prolonged climax of Atahualpa's captivity and Pizarro's watchful, tiger-like procrastination; and from every point of view, whether we think of their conflict as a clash of races, of cultures or of characters, the irreconcilably tragic confrontation is there. On the facts alone, large differences of sympathy would be possible; but religious prejudice has made these differences even greater. The heat of the old English-speaking enmity with Spain has long outlasted its original causes, and by now the tradition of the cruel, fanatical, heretic-burning Spaniard, greedy for gold and incapable of building a stable society, is well established at the back of our minds. No doubt, the counter cries of successful Protestantism have been shaken by a more liberal scholarship in the last generation or two, and we are not so inclined to "the black legend" as we were. But a tradition is a very tough growth and it is a long time before we can arrive at the point of granting, that a people like the Spaniards are (and have a right to be!) in many important respects radically different from ourselves. When we do arrive at that point, the full tragic force of the conquest of Peru becomes clearer. And by tragedy, one does not mean disaster; one means the death struggle of equal things.

Mr. Tschiffely's short popular history of the Spanish conquest of Peru, does not rise to these imaginative levels, but it is a useful book. It is enlivened by a first-hand view of the tremendous country of freezing winds, burning desert and the jungle hot-house, so that one gets a proper sense of the appalling difficulties which Pizarro's handful of men heroically survived; and it also contains some discreet historical correctives. It is better to read Prescott, of course, for Prescott's is one of those great historical imaginations which grasp a whole scene. It is true that he was touched by the smugness of American Protestantism; and a book like Mr. Tschiffely's which is (I would say) in some unacknowledged debt to Prescott, does supply the modifying footnote. If it is granted that the Spaniards were gold-mad and religion-mad, there is an enormous positive side to their contribution. Wheat, barley, oats, oranges, lemons, grapes, figs were among the numerous plants they introduced to the New World; the cow and the horse were among the animals. The Peruvians, who had reached the highest degree of civilisation in South America, used only one beast of burden—the llama—and beside that, had domesticated only the duck. Moreover, the Spaniards did not exterminate the Indians, except in the Antilles; and it must be remembered that it was a Spaniard, Las Casas, who successfully protested against the excesses of the early colonists. It was a hard age and it is difficult to see much difference between the Anglo-Saxon organisers of the slave trade and the exploiters of the Peruvian mines. Prescott himself, who moralised piously on the prosaic virtues of the New England settlers and treated Atahualpa almost as if he were a Christian martyr, was obliged as a liberal to see the weakness of the Inca beehive State; and despite its busy, rational hum, it was split in two by an anarchic feud between two brothers. When one thinks of the captivity of the Inca, one is obliged to remember that behind his enigmatic dignity, behind that insuperable conviction of divinity which matched the Spaniard's own vehement pride, was a cunning as deep as that of the unlettered men who tore his country from him.

Mr. Tschiffely is mainly concerned with the dramatic narrative. He begins with Balboa and goes on to the madly courageous expeditions which broke up one after the other in starvation and fever. Only one element of the drama is omitted and that is the fact that the search for the Inca kingdom was a race between the Pizarro school who worked down from Panama in the north, and the less successful school of Barlow and Cabot who argued—and had indeed attempted—an overland route from Brazil in the south-east. Barlow and Cabot were peddling their schemes at the Spanish court soon after Pizarro received the royal permit for his second expedition. Chance and long failure play the biggest hand in all these tales of the great navigators. But when at last, the Inca kingdom was penetrated and Pizarro's little band went inch by inch in their rain-rusted armour into the Andes, we come upon the real struggle of character and the conflict of civilisations. All the great actors in that drama came to violent ends, except Hernando Pizarro, the irascible brother of the conquistador, who spent the last 20 years of his life in prison. The great Pizarro was murdered, Almagro was executed, so was Gonzalez Pizarro. Atahualpa was, of course, garrotted and his women attempted a mass suicide. Once that fatal meeting with the Inca takes place, there is an ominous stillness before a storm of suspicion, jealousy, treachery, terror and bloodshed breaks out and it rings most horribly among the Spaniards themselves. Every meeting foreshadows a betrayal, every contract written in the name of God is smirched. They are gangsters with a mission. The Elizabethan drama alone presents a picture of passion so untrammelled and retribution so quick; though in contemporary Europe, too, we see a spectacle which seems to be working up to the same frightful pitch. In the Spaniards we see not the greed for gold only—though that played its large part—but something deeper than that: the dark side of knight errantry and the savage side of the spirit of the crusades. And, lest we become sentimental about the Inca, we must note the fascinating and revealing fact that of all the Pizarros, Atahualpa preferred Hernando, with his huge pride and temper. He admired an exorbitance which was native to himself. Mr. Tschiffely's short and lively narrative appreciates these points and makes them economically. His book ought to be specially liked in schools.

V. S. PRITCHETT

NEW NOVELS

The Ship. By C. S. FORESTER. *Michael Joseph.* 8s. 6d.

The Seed Beneath the Snow. By IGNAZIO SILONE. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

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KEGAN PAUL

make an early and instinctive assessment of their alents, and exploit them fully without ever ttempting to try them too far. The worse ault, and the rarer, is timidity. Yet there have een several novelists of whom much has been xpected and who have failed not through lack f talent but through lack of courage. This is he worse fault, if only because it results in a lain deprivation. Indeed, the most fundamental in of all is often held (and with biblical precedent) to be simply this—a failure to make full se of the talents which God has given us. The pposite fault is more ludicrous but less serious : or one thing, it is far easier to correct. A writer ith a real but limited talent may sometimes swell with human discontent, with a passion o leap in one bound from his foothill to the peak f Olympus. The result is always absurd but ften instructive.

This is not in the least to suggest that talents re enclosed in iron walls or that a prodigious evelopment is impossible. But Icarus is the arning against any attempt to soar suddenly rom talent to genius.

Mr. Forester escapes any censure in either irection. There can hardly be a better living xample of a writer who has truly assessed the imits of his ability, yet firmly resolved to extract ll that it can yield. I have read only two earlier ooks by this relatively prolific writer, and both ere better than the novel under review. But his is far from making *The Ship* a bad or even nsatisfying book. Never was that unfairly espised word "competent" better deserved.

The ship is the light cruiser *Artemis* on convoy uty in the Mediterranean. A heavy Italian ir attack has just been sustained, and during he course of the narrative two naval attacks are aunched by greatly superior Italian forces. Mr. Forester uses his technical knowledge with great kill, much in the manner of Richard Hughes, lthough with a less poetic imagination. He is good on the *Artemis*, far less good on her crew. No clear picture of individuals emerges from his brief, conventional portraits, and consequently ne never feels that intimate sympathy which lone could make the book more than first-rate ocumentary. For example, the death of the gunner-poet is not in the least moving, simply ecause his existence has never been quite credible. When he sees the crew as a whole, cting and feeling identically under the common mpact of an engagement, Mr. Forester is as appy as in his descriptions of the ship. But e is too cursory with his individuals.

In order to criticise such a novel as *The Seed Beneath the Snow*, one must step back from it as one pauses and steps back from a great picture hanging among inferiors. Silone may well be the greatest living satirist, and in that tradition this book is surely as good as anything that he has written. The satire is as bitter, as grotesque and as vivid as ever. There is no sign that he has begun—that last infirmity of many a satirist—to pull his punches. The scene is the familiar village life of Fascist Italy, now with the Abyssinian war groaning in the background. Local officials, local sycophants, local bombast and hypocrisy, meanness and disloyalty, are castigated with the subtle strokes of an expert flogger. And, a rare quality, the bitterest scenes are really funny with the huge brave humour of Gogol. As a satirist there is not the least sign that Silone has failed to make full use of his genius. It is only on the other, positive side that I felt a quiver of doubt.

In *Fontamara* Silone firmly believed that the only weapon against the Fascist state was political action in a disciplined political party. Pietro, the fugitive hero of the new book, has for years been a member of such a party, fighting at home and abroad against the political enemy. But by the opening of the book he has undergone a spiritual conversion. He has turned to that old doctrine which has opposed every party since the beginning of history, the doctrine of individual salvation, of personal integration. It is a familiar and understandable conversion, but all too often accompanied by a sort of graceful wooliness, a mysticism of vague goodwill. From this Pietro is not altogether immune. The stupidities and harshness of "the party" are all too easy to show, but the alternative seems somehow inadequate. Silone's seed beneath the snow is the seed of friendship and loyalty, of honesty and love for the poor. The programme is understandably minimal in the face of so hideous an adversary. But is it enough, this goodwill haloed with mysticism? Pietro and his friends (among whom a dog and a donkey are charmingly numbered) succeed in creating a precarious paradise in the midst of the inferno, based largely on the principles of Common Wealth. They even proselytise with some small measure of success. Nor is there any lack of vigour and beauty in Silone's presentation of these eternal human values.

But there is a failure of analysis. We are told that Italians are naturally bombastic, that human beings are often guilty of disloyalty, that the spirit is weak. But without a more profound study of the disease the cure is bound to seem superficial. Of course, the answer to falsehood is truth, the answer to hatred is love—but how is the transition to be made? I was beguiled by the sheer beauty and power of the book, yet I was left with a vague intellectual resentment, a sense that too much had been left unsaid. And in an exceedingly intellectual book, largely preoccupied with argument, this must be accounted a weakness.

And yet how triumphantly the book succeeds! How rich and funny, how deeply moving it is. Silone is one of the few giants of the modern novel.

Mr. Henriques is not a giant, although a first startled myopic glance might mistake him for one. All he has done is to prove that the fountain flows as effusively in one great war as in another. Because *Captain Smith and Company* is boldly experimental, it may seem obscurantist to insist that it is a failure. But to weigh against the courage of an experiment, there is all the loud trumpeting of an experiment which claims to have been wonderfully successful. The publisher's note warns us that exceptional demands will be made on the reader and hints that only the thoughtful will be worthy of initiation. I believe that the emperor is once again wearing no clothes at all. But this is what we are told to expect. ". . . the media of poetry, verse, metrical prose and 'straight' prose are in turn sought and intermingled. The technique is as much that of the stage or the film as of the novel . . . compound of allegory and plain descriptive writing, meditation and action which becomes the narrative . . . deliberate confusion of the first and third person . . . read on, listening as you might to orchestral music." We are offered all this and heaven too.

Captain Smith and four of his comrades lie dying on a beach. From there we retreat to the immediate past, to the remote past, to Smith's past and each of his comrade's past, to prose, rich and fruity, and poetry, thin and inconsequential. Smith is his comrades, and his comrades are Smith; the past is the present and life is death, and so on. The theme, then, is immensely ambitious, nothing less than the meaning of war and peace and of life and death. Yet I could find hardly one penetrating articulate reflection in the whole book. The disguise is elaborate but I suspect that the face behind it is Strube's Little Man after all. The real pity of it is that no one could doubt Mr. Hen-

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riques's talent. At his simplest he writes so well that it is difficult to avoid a strong resentment whenever the clap-trap begins again.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

MARSYAS AND HIS FLUTE

Season and Festival. By HERBERT PALMER. *Faber.* 2*s*. 6*d*.

Poets may roughly be divided into two kinds, those who follow Apollo and work with sane deliberation, and those who follow Dionysus and sing out of sheer drunkenness of spirit. How happy are the first, with their calm craftsmanship and reasoned architecture. How miserable are the second, with their uncertain inspiration, their hit or miss methods, their ecstatic heights or their abysmal bathos. The mythical Marsyas too truly represents them, a creature flayed alive by the god of music.

Herbert Palmer is a capital example of their kind. Timeless and unplaceable, he sings to-day as though the world were young and he a boy enraged in it. He has no reticences and no shames, no subterfuges or politics. If he is hurt he yells. And if joy comes his way, he pours it down and gets blind drunk on it. He challenges all comers, including the jealous gods, and in consequence he is always in process, like Marsyas, of being flayed alive. Again and again in the wild dithyramb of his verse he utters this challenge and defiance, and follows it with the shriek of pain that tears through the fabric of his poetry.

> They have squeezed my mouth dumb; their clutch for a year yet may rankle.
> I will tie Robin Death to my side, with his claw on my ankle.
> Let them come, stick and drum, and assail me across the grey boulders,
> I will flutter my toes, and rattle the screes on their shoulders.

It is difficult to find any poem by him that is not flawed by this break where the singing voice becomes a shriek of almost animal pain or rage, whose expression is always an uncouth image or a stroke of absurd, private symbolism. This lack of humorous restraint leads to all sorts of incongruities. Here is an example:

> For when I eat gooseberry pudding or tart
> Zig-zag goes my brain, and away whirls my heart,
> I'm a schoolboy again with my wits on the roam . . .

and at the end of this confession, which the reader accepts with some embarrassment, the poem ends

> Forgive me my trespasses, Lord, and be nice,
> Boil me gooseberry pudding in Paradise.

Only great candour of spirit, a devastating innocence such as that possessed by the muscular brother of St. Francis, could produce such verse as that.

Out of this uncalculating and unworldly innocence, however, the most lucid beauty is liable to spring, and we know that at his best, Herbert Palmer is capable of Fra Angelico-like simplicity. Most of the poems in this selection (no poet ever needed selection more carefully) have that quality. Such lyrics as the *Prayer for Rain*, the sonnet *Ishmael, David and Goliath*, are likely to live long in the anthologies. I should put the following song amongst them:

> Put on, frail ghosts, more tangible gown;
> Compass me round and comfort me.
> My soul is utterly cast down,
> For I have killed my enemy.
>
> I would that he were whole again.
> Wounds would I take without a moan,
> For as I flung him to the slain
> I knew his spirit for my own.

RICHARD CHURCH

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

PROKOFIEFF: *Romeo and Juliet Suite.* Moscow Philharmonic Orch., cond. the Composer (Decca Z1–6).

MOZART: *Concerto in D* (K218). Yehudi Menuhin, with Liverpool Philh. Orch., cond. Malcolm Sargent (H.M.V. DB6146–8).

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Theme and Variations from Suite in G.* Liverpool Philh. Orch., cond. Malcolm Sargent (H.M.V. C3338–40).

MOZART: *Piano Sonata in A minor* (K310). Denis Matthews (Col. DX1114–5).

FERGUSON: *Piano Sonata in F minor.* Myra Hess (H.M.V. C3335–7).

CHOPIN: *Barcarolle.* Kentner (Col. DX1112).

RACHMANINOFF: *Humoresque, Op.* 10, *No.* 5, and *Moment Musical, Op.* 16. Rachmaninoff (H.M.V. DA1771).

RACHMANINOFF: *Preludes in A minor, Op.* 32, *No.* 8; *in A major, Op.* 32, *No.* 9; *in B minor, Op.* 32, *No.* 10. Moura Lympany (Decca K1030).

BLACK: *Abodah*, and

RAVEL: *Kaddisch.* Yehudi Menuhin, acc. Marcel Gazelle (H.M.V. DB6139).

JOHNANYI: *Serenade in C, Op.* 10. Heifetz, William Primrose, and Feuermann (H.M.V. DB6143–5).

BORODIN: *Prince Igor, Scenes and Dances.* K. Derjinskaya, A. Tirogev, and M. Mikhailov, with the Bolohvi Theatre State Orch. and Choir (Decca X265–8).

BRITTEN: *Hymn to St. Cecilia.* Fleet Street C (Decca K1088–9).

HANDEL: "Let the Bright Seraphim" ("Samson Isobel Baillie, acc. Hallé Orch., cond. Warw Braithwaite (Col. DX1113).

I begin this article with a warning. In fu I shall refer to an actual recording only if it good or passable: absence of all mention will m coarseness, a bad surface, or one of the other curses wartime gramophone life. Exceptional badness w however, be noticed, too.

Prokofieff's *Romeo and Juliet* is a very queer affai always interesting, sometimes romantically beauti sometimes rather clumsy. Designed as a ballet, stands efficiently by itself and is not among composer's least engaging works. I should add one disc, entitled "Juliet as a Girl," has not yet arri from Russia; so that purchasers who find Z2 miss from the set may rest assured that it will eventu be issued. Prokofieff is never negligible and som times approaches greatness, and if this is a mi work it contains pages of semi-permanent value.

What a pity Mozart wrote no violin concertos at peak of his career! One would give much to have least one equivalent of the C minor Piano Concer As it is, we must be content with early works have, of course, charm and finish, but little depth thought or feeling. The most recent set of popular D major Concerto has much to recomme it: the balance of solo instrument and orchestra skilfully managed (for once) and the playing extrem musicianly. But the recording, although not mar by the usual faults, is rather dead: concertos ou to sound as if they were being played in a hall full people—not in a muffled studio empty of all save performers.

The Tchaikovsky *Variations* dazzle and fascin on a first hearing; closer acquaintance reveals em brilliance, pomposity, inflation. The *crescendi*, pedal points, work up to nothing in particular; or two bursts of inspired melody do not, I feel, ca one through so long a piece. Yet I know many peo differ from me here, and they will be pleased by set, which is vital and highly coloured, if a little in texture.

The Mozart Piano Sonata is, I believe, fashioned tougher material than the Concerto noticed abo At all events it is beautifully played. Whether prefer this version to Schnabel's, is a matter of tas Myself, I should say there was not much in it. hear this Sonata and Howard Ferguson's in a sin session, is an experience well worth having. Fergus idiom and outlook are not to everyone's taste; the may dislike this work for its obstinate gloom and fo powerful quality that refuses to be heroic, while

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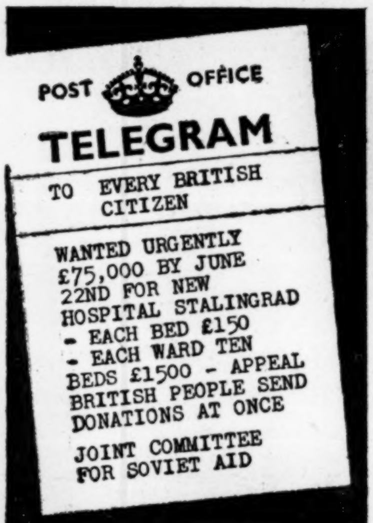

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progressive young will possibly think the style heavy and the form too much that of the day before yesterday. Personally, I find a great deal to admire in this Sonata, which I happen to know extremely well. If readers will follow my example I believe they will end by finding the tragic quality of the music genuinely impressive, the form satisfying, the texture remarkably well-managed. The themes in themselves are distinguished and memorable, and the slow movement has a quiet warmth that is touching, though I feel that here the material could have borne a more extensive development than it gets. The instrumental style derives from Brahms; it aims at building up large masses of sound by an intricate assemblage of parts that often look deceptively horizontal on the page. Dame Myra Hess was largely responsible for introducing this Sonata to the public, and her performance is authoritative. The recording is good. No music-lover can afford to ignore these records, even if he does not end by acquiring them.

The *Barcarolle* is surely one of Chopin's finer pieces: formally superb, it unfolds so much more than it promises. In the opening bars the boat pushes off from the bank; but once afloat it is the scenery that interests Chopin—the scenery and the emotions, rhapsodic and lyrical, which, obedient to the steady rhythm of the water, together build up an image coloured (as always with Chopin) by a love of what is as irrevocable as the water itself. This lovely piece needs to be played with passion under strong rhythmic control. Mr. Kentner has the first, but not the second: the central passage in A major, for instance, falls badly to pieces. This is not a performance I should want to hear more than once. Rubinstein's recording is still by far the best.

Rachmaninoff's playing is usually worth listening to, even when the music is inferior. This disc, however, was a bit too much even for an enthusiast like myself. These fussy, uninteresting little *études* have no more permanence than the average gramophone needle, and their triviality is thrown into relief by an outstandingly waspish recording. The first two Preludes on Miss Lympany's latest record are also of little interest; but that in B minor is perhaps the best in the whole volume, and it is delicately played. Readers are advised to compare this rendering with Moiseiwitsch's, which is a good deal less sensitive but more glassily brilliant in tone.

There is nothing much to be said about the Menuhin record. Of course, it is well played; but the badness of the recording makes Ida Haendel's version, published recently by Decca, more acceptable. The Ravel piece amounts to very little. So does the *Serenade in C* by that often charming composer, Dohnanyi. This is very second-rate music, and the magnificent playing of the trio is entirely ruined by a recording which is insupportable on even the toughest radiogram. One wonders on what principle the balance-and-control man was working. The result can hardly be described as music at all.

The new records of *Prince Igor* are of interest for two reasons: they are enthusiastically Russian, and they contain two duets between Vladimir and Jaroslava which have not hitherto been recorded. Those who already possess the Polovtsian Dances and Chaliapine's wonderful old record of Konchak's Aria, will hardly want to acquire the whole of this new set; but the duets are vivid in their way and sung with an aggressive self-assurance that seems to suit the music, though the voices are placed much too far forward.

Britten's *Hymn to St. Cecilia* has already gained a popularity considerable enough to insure its being recorded more than once. Otherwise one would have to regret this rather uncertain performance, which can hardly be regarded as more than a first approximation to what the music should sound like. However, some passages come off well enough and the set is welcome for the time being.

Miss Isobel Baillie continues, most successfully, to warble herself through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The latest example of her most intelligent singing is a Handel aria like several hundred others; which is exactly why amateurs of this kind of thing will want to possess it. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 696

Set by Rosamond Lehmann

Most of us have vivid memories—searing or ecstatic, or, more usually, a mixture of these emotions—of the children's parties we attended in our early youth. Competitors are invited to write a description, in not more than 200 words, of the party they remember best.

Entries must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, June 14th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 693

Set by S. Smiles

Competitors are invited to submit quotations in verse or prose applicable to the Allied victory in North Africa. The usual prizes of four guineas are offered for the happiest finds.

Report by S. Smiles

William Bliss and Marie de Beaufort sent almost the same quotation from Plutarch. William Bliss sends also an entry from Southey's *Life of Nelson:*

> Thousands of Arabs and Egyptians lined the housetops during the action, rejoicing in the destruction which had overtaken their invaders. . . "Victory," said Nelson, "is not a name strong enough for such a scene." He called it a conquest.

The same remark of Nelson's comes from Guy Innes. Towanbucket and J. E. I. C., both send the *Samson Agonistes* passage beginning "Oh how comely it is and reviving." Sir Robert Witt sends from *Henry IV*.

A foutra for the world and worldlings,
I speak of Africa and golden joys.

The second line is sent also by Archibald Gibbs and Stanley J. Sharpless. N. P. Meadway and A. R. Watson both send the passage from *Henry V* about "Fathers that, like so many Alexanders, have in the past from morn till even fought, and sheath'd their swords for lack of argument." Phyllis Norman has a good quotation from Marvell's *Horatian Ode*, A. G. an apt passage in Smollett's *Regicide*. C. A. R. du F. gives the passage from *Alexander's Feast*, describing the vengeance of the Grecian ghosts. M. G. Wellens quotes from *The Battle of Otterbourne:*

As soon as he knew Montgomery
 He stuck his sword's point in ground;
And the Montgomery was a courteous knight
And quickly took him by the hand.

Any distribution of prizes is likely to seem unfair. I suggest a guinea for William Bliss, half a guinea each for Marie de Beaufort, Guy Innes, Sir Robert Witt (I like his French oath), A. G., N. P. Meadway and A. R. Watson.

"This was a long and painful, and, in two respects, a dangerous march; first, if they should lose their provision of water, as for several days none could be obtained; and, secondly, if a violent south wind should rise upon them while they were travelling through the wide extent of deep sands . . . blowing the sand together in heaps, and raising, as it were, the whole desert like a sea upon them. All these difficulties were weighed and represented to him; but Alexander was not easily to be diverted from anything he was bent upon. For, fortune having hitherto seconded him in his designs, made him resolute and firm in his opinions, and the boldness of his temper raised a sort of passion in him for surmounting difficulties; as if it were not enough to be always victorious in the field, unless places and seasons and nature herself submitted to him."—(*From Plutarch's life of Alexander the Great, in the translation called Dryden's*, 1874.)

"From thirst of rule what dire disasters flew!
How flames that guilt ambition taught to glow!
Wish gains on wish, desire surmounts desire;
Hope fans the blaze, and envy feeds the fire.
From crime to crime aspires the madd'ning soul;
Nor laws, nor oaths nor fears its rage control;
Till Heav'n at length awakes supremely just
And levels all its tow'ring schemes in dust!"
(Concluding passage, *The Regicide*.—Smollett.)

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